00033067

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 15 June, 2016

A

JOURNEY

FROM

BENGAL TO ENGLAND,

THROUGH

THE NORTHERN PART OF INDIA,
KASHMIRE, AFGHANISTAN, AND PERSIA, AND
INTO RUSSIA, BY THE CASPIAN-SEA.

BY GEORGE FORSTER.

33067

IN THE CIVIL SERVICE OF
THE HONOURABLE THE EAST-INDIA COMPANY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

AA a -12

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR R. FAULDER, NEW BOND-STREET.

1798.

00033067

FORSTER'S TRAVELS.

LETTER XIII.

Kaſhmire, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

IT is now neceſſary to call your attention, already burthened, I fear, with no very pleaſant matter, to the ſubject of Kaſhmire, and endeavour to deſcribe the natural beauties of a valley, which perhaps, ſtands unparalleled for its air, ſoil, and a picturesque variety of landſcape.

THE northern path of the Bannaul hill, mentioned in my laſt letter, is about one mile and a half ſhorter, than that of the ſouthern ſide, not that this difference ariſes from the level of the low lands of Bannaul and Kaſhmire, but from the greater de-

clivity of the ſouthern face of the hill. Yet it is evident, from the precipitated current of the rivers of this quarter of India, that the valley of Kaſhmire is conſiderably more elevated than the Punjab plains. This height of ſituation, ſurrounded alſo by mountains, whoſe lofty ſummits are covered with ſnow, during a great part of the year, imparts a coldneſs to the air of Kaſhmire, which its immediate line of latitude would not otherwiſe poſſeſs.

VEERE NAUG was the firſt village we halted at, within the valley, where our party was ſtrictly examined, but from the reſpect ſhewn by all claſſes of people to Zulphucar Khan, we were permitted to paſs untaxed and unmoleſted. A rare uſage at a Kaſhmirian cuſtom-houſe! It ſhould have been before noticed, that our patron, from the lameneſs of his hand and a general infirm ſtate of body, was obliged to travel in a litter; a ſpecies of carriage different from any ſeen in the ſouthern quarters of India. The frame of four ſlight pieces of wood, is about four feet and a half long, and three in breadth, with a bottom of cotton lacing or ſplit canes interwoven. Two ſtout bamboo poles, project three feet, from the end of the frame and are faſtened to its outward ſides, by iron rings. The extremities of theſe bamboos are looſely connected by folds of cords, into which is fixed, by cloſely twiſting and binding at the centre, a thick pole, three feet long; and by theſe central poles, the litter, or as it is here called, the Sampan, is ſupported on the ſhoulders of four men. This conveyance you will ſee affords no ſhelter againſt any inclemency

of

of weather, which is braved at all ſeaſons by theſe men of the mountains.

In the paſſage of ſome of the ſteep hills the Khan was obliged to walk, and it ſeemed to me ſurpriſing, that the bearers were able to carry the litter over them. The Kaſhmirians, who are the ordinary travellers of this road, uſe ſandals made of ſtraw rope, as an approved defence of their feet, and to ſave their ſhoes. On leaving Sumboo, I had been adviſed to adopt this practice, but, my feet not being proof againſt the rough colliſion of the ſtraw, I ſoon became lame and threw off my ſandals. From a glaring deficiency of method, in the arrangement of my remarks, I am often fearful that but faint traces of a general chain will be exhibited. It is not that my ideas flow ſo thick and ſtrong, as, in confidence of their ſuperiour excellency, to contemn reſtriction or that obedience to order, which is ſo eſſential to their utility; it is an habit, perhaps an idle one, that impels me to note at the moment, the train of thoughts which occur; and it becomes neceſſary I ſee to plead this excuſe, for having ſo abruptly dragged in the ſtory of the khan's litter and my ſtraw ſhoes, when I ſhould have been laying before you ſketches of this beautiful country, which, in the language of Perſia, is called Kachmire be Nazeer.*

In the vicinity of Veere Naug is ſeen a torrent of water burſting from the ſide of a mountain with impetuous force, and imme-

* Unequalled.

diately forming a conſiderable ſtream,* which contributes, with numerous other rivulets, to fertilize the valley of Kaſhmire. On the ſpot, where this piece of water reaches the plain, a baſon of a ſquare form has been conſtructed, it is ſaid, by the emperor Jehanguir, for receiving and diſcharging the current; and the trees of various kinds, which overſpread the borders of the baſon, at once give an ornament to the ſcene, and a grateful ſhade to the inhabitants of that quarter, who, in the ſummer ſeaſon, make it a place of common reſort.

The road from Veere Naug leads through a country, exhibiting that ſtore of luxuriant imagery, which is produced by a happy diſpoſition of hill, dale, wood and water; and, that theſe rare excellencies of nature might be diſplayed in their full glory, it was the ſeaſon of ſpring, when the trees, the apple, pear, the peach, apricot, the cherry and mulberry bore a variegated load of bloſſom. The cluſters alſo, of the red and white roſe, with an infinite claſs of flowering ſhrubs, preſented a view ſo gayly decked, that no extraordinary warmth of imagination, was required to fancy that I ſtood, at leaſt, on a province of fairy land. Except the mulberry, I do not believe that this country produces any ſpecies of the fruits of India, and but few of its vegetables; ſuch is the change effected within a ſpace of two degrees of latitude; this ſudden revolution of climate cannot be

* It is called Vheit or Behat in the Kaſhmirian language, and in the Sanſcrit, Vetuſtah.

aſcribed

aſcribed, to the northern ſituation of Kaſhmire, which is little more than two hundred miles from Lahore, where, many of the fruits of ſouthern India come to maturity, but to the ſurrounding ſnowy mountains, and an highly elevated land; which the Hindoos ſay, though very widely, is three perpendicular miles higher than the Punjab.

On the 26th of April, at Durrqo or Lurroo, a ſmall but very populous town, ſeven coſſes from Bannaul, where our khan and his ſuite were hoſpitably received by the chief, and lodged that night at his houſe. Our entertainment, and the cordial behaviour of the hoſt, made us a general recompence for the fatigues of the journey; and I in an inſtant, forgot the pains of my bruiſed feet, in the pleaſant compariſon between a commodious ſhelter and the boiſterous weather of the mountains.

On the 27th, at Iſlaamabad, five coſſes — a large town, ſituate on the north ſide of the river Jalum, which is here ſpringing from the mountains, or penetrating them in narrow openings. At this place the Jalum, over which a wooden bridge is built, is about eighty yards acroſs, and from the level ſurface of the country has a gentle current. Our party, this evening, hired a boat to proceed to the city, and had gone more than five miles, when a written order arrived, in an evil hour, requiring us to return and remain at Iſlaamabad, until a paſſport ſhould be obtained from the court. This check infuſed a general gloom, and rendered our ſituation, already confined and irkſome, almoſt comfortleſs. The boat, a very ſmall

one,

one, was ſcantily covered with a ſlender mat, and the wind, current, and a heavy rain had ſet in againſt us. The rain continued inceſſantly the whole night, and though my bedding was drenched with water, I received no injury from having lain on it ſeveral hours. After expreſſing my grateful acknowledgements to a hale conſtitution, I am induced to aſcribe a great ſhare of the prevention of ſickneſs, on this as on other occaſions to the frequent uſe of tobacco, which manifeſtly poſſeſſes the property of defending the body againſt the impreſſion of damps and cold or impure air, which, from the thick ranges of wood and hills, is tainted with noxious vapours, produces fevers of a malignant kind, and I am prompted to attribute the good health I enjoyed in thoſe parts, to the common habit of ſmoking tobacco.

Our party was greatly ſurprized at the receipt of this very unſeaſonable mandate, as we had during the day, occupied one of the moſt public places of the town, where moſt of the principal people viſited Zulphucar Khan, ſupplied him with proviſions, and were apprized of his intention to depart in the evening. But it had been iſſued I believe by the governor of the town, in reſentment of the khan's not viſiting him; and operated with a quick force, on the minds of all the men, and even the children of Iſlaamabad, who, but the ſhort day before, from treating us with a ſtudied kindneſs, would now paſs our quarters without a notice. In every region of the earth, the loſs of power, nay the trivial croſſes of life, too often cauſe the deſertion of thoſe, whom the language of the world has

has entitled friends, but the averted looks of the prince are ever faithfully copied by the courtiers. The diſgraced courtier of Aſia, or he againſt whom the frown of the deſpot ſhall be pointed, becomes immediatly infected, and all men, by intuitive knowledge, it ſhould ſeem, ſhun him. A retreat is rarely made by an Aſiatic ſtateſman, who uſually cloſes his political career in a dungeon or on a ſcaffold.

In Aſia, the principles of juſtice, honor or patriotiſm, as they confer no ſubſtantial benefit, nor tend to elevate the character, are ſeldom ſeen to actuate the mind of the ſubject, who is conſtitutionally led to fix the tenure of life and property, and fame, on the will of his prince. Zulphucar Khan informs me, that the chief of Kaſhmire, though a youth, ſtands in the foremoſt rank of tyrants, and that the exactions of a Hindoo cuſtom-houſe will be ſoon forgotten in the oppreſſion of his government. The one, he ſaid, affects a trifling portion of property, the other involves fortune and life.

Two or three days after our arrival at Iſlaamabad, the Dewan, or principal officer of the governor of Kaſhmire encamped in our vicinity, and being acquainted with Zulphucar Khan, obtained permiſſion for the procedure of our party to the city. It is here neceſſary to obſerve, that no perſon, except by ſtealth, can enter or depart from Kaſhmire without an order, marked with the ſeal of government. The Dewan, attracted I ſuppoſe by the appearance of ſo white a perſon, made ſome enquiry into the nature of my occupation

pation and views. I told the old ſtory of a turk travelling towards his country, with the addition, that to avoid the Sicque territory, I had taken the route of Kaſhmire, where I hoped to experience the benefit of his protection. My ſtory was favourably heard, and I received a very cordial aſſurance of every neceſſary aſſiſtance. Our party being directed to attend the Dewan, and to form a part of his domeſtic ſuite, we proceeded by water, on the afternoon of the 3d of May, to Bhyteepour, nine coſſes, a village ſituate on the northern bank of the Jalum, the evening was ſerene, and the variegated view of populous villages, interſperſed through a plain which was waving with a rich harveſt, and enlivened by the notes of a thouſand birds, filled the mind with harmony and delight.

In the vicinity of Bhyteepour are ſeen the remains of an Hindoo temple, which, though impaired by the ravages of time, and more by the deſtructive hand of the Mahometans, ſtill bore evident marks of a ſuperior taſte and ſculpture. Kaſhmire, having fallen a conqueſt to the followers of Mahomet, at an early period of their empire in India, when they furiouſly broke down every fence that barred the progreſs of their religion, felt the full force of a barbarous zeal; and its monuments of worſhip and taſte were thrown to the ground in ſhapeleſs piles of ruin.

The Dewan taking Zulphucar Khan with him, went, on the 5th of the month into the interior part of the country, and directed me to wait for him at the town of Pamper, ten miles further down

the

the river, where an order was ſent for my accommodation. This perſon of the Hindoo ſect, poſſeſſed a more liberal diſpoſition than is uſually found in an Indian: though perhaps I am ſo much biaſſed by his indulgent treatment, that my opinion may be thought partial, but his deportment ſeemed uniformly benevolent to all claſſes of people; with his companions he was affable and good humoured, he was humane to his domeſtics, and he exerciſed with a reaſonable temperance the duties of his office.

On the 7th, the Dewan came to Pamper, whence I went to the city, a diſtance of ſeven coſſes in his boat, which, though in Kaſhmire was thought magnificent, would not have been diſgraced in the ſtation of a kitchen tender to a Bengal badgero. The boats of Kaſhmire are long and narrow, and are rowed with paddles: from the ſtern, which is a little elevated, to the centre, a tilt of mats is extended for the ſhelter of paſſengers or merchandize. The country being interſected with numerous ſtreams, navigable for ſmall veſſels, great advantage and conveniency would ariſe to it from the water conveyance, eſpecially in its interior commerce, did not the miſerable policy of the Afghan government cruſh the ſpirit of the people.

The city, which in the ancient annals of India was known by the name of Siringnaghur, but now by that of the province at large, extends about three miles on each ſide of the river Jalum, over which are four or five wooden bridges, and occupies

in ſome part of its breadth, which is irregular, about two miles. The houſes, many of them two and three ſtories high, are ſlightly built of brick and mortar, with a large intermixture of timber. On a ſtanding roof of wood is laid a covering of fine earth, which ſhelters the building from the great quantity of ſnow that falls in the winter ſeaſon. This fence communicates an equal warmth in winter, as a refreſhing coolneſs in the ſummer ſeaſon, when the tops of the houſes, which are planted with a variety of flowers, exhibit at a diſtance the ſpacious view of a beautifully checquered parterre. The ſtreets are narrow, and choaked with the filth of the inhabitants, who are proverbially unclean. No buildings are ſeen in this city worthy of remark; though the Kaſhmirians boaſt much of a wooden moſque, called the Juma'h Muſſid,* erected by one of the emperors of Hindoſtan; but its claim to diſtinction is very moderate.

The ſubahdar, or governor of Kaſhmire, reſides in a fortreſs called Shere Ghur, occupying the ſouth-eaſt quarter of the city, where moſt of his officers and troops are alſo quartered.

The benefits which this city enjoys of a mild ſalubrious air, a river flowing through its centre, of many large and commodious houſes, are eſſentially alloyed by its confined conſtruction and the extreme filthineſs of the people. The covered floating baths,

* Jumah is the ſabath of the Mahometans, and Muſſid the name of a public place of worſhip. In pre-eminence, the principal place of prayer in Mahometan cities is termed Jumah Muſſid.

which

which are ranged along the ſides of the river, give the only teſtimony of convenience or order; ſuch baths are much wanted by the Indian Mahometans, who from the climate and their religion, are obliged to make frequent ablutions, and, in preventing the expoſure of their women on theſe occaſions, to adopt laborious precautions.

The lake of Kaſhmire, or in the provincial language, the Dall, long celebrated for its beauties, and the pleaſure it affords to the inhabitants of this country, extends from the north-eaſt quarter of the city, in an oval circumference of five or ſix miles, and joins the Jalum by a narrow channel, near the ſuburbs. On the entrance to the eaſtward is ſeen a detached hill, on which ſome devout Mahometan has dedicated a temple to the great king Solomon, whoſe memory in Kaſhmire is held in profound veneration.

The legends of the country aſſert, that Solomon viſited this valley, and finding it covered, except the eminence now mentioned with a noxious water, which had no outlet, he opened a paſſage in the mountains, and gave to Kaſhmire its beautiful plains. The Tucht Suliman, the name beſtowed by the Mahometans on the hill, forms one ſide of a grand portal to the lake, and on the other ſtands a lower hill, which, in the Hinduee is called Hirney Purvet, or the green hill, a name probably adopted from its being covered with gardens and orchards.

On the ſummit of the Hirney Purvet, the Kaſhmirians have

erected a moſque to the honor of a Muckdoom Saheb, who is as famous in their tales, as Thomas-a-Becket in thoſe of Canterbury. The men never undertake a buſineſs of moment without conſulting Muckdoom Saheb; and when a Kaſhmirian woman wants a handſome huſband or a chopping boy, ſhe addreſſes her prayer to the miniſters of this ſaint, who are ſaid to ſeldom fail in gratifying her wiſh. The northern view of the lake is terminated at the diſtance of twelve miles, by a detached range of mountains, which ſlope from the centre to each angle; and from the baſe, a ſpacious plain, preſerved in conſtant verdure by numerous ſtreams, extends with an eaſy declivity to the margin of the water.

In the centre of the plain, as it approaches the lake, one of the Dehli emperors, I believe Shah Jehan, conſtructed a ſpacious garden, called the Shalimar, which is abundantly ſtored with fruit-trees and flowering ſhrubs. Some of the rivulets which interſect the plain, are led into a canal at the back of the garden, and flowing through its centre, or occaſionally thrown into a variety of water-works, compoſe the chief beauty of the Shalimar. To decorate this ſpot, the Mogul princes of India have diſplayed an equal magnificence and taſte; eſpecially Jehan Gheer, who, with the enchanting Noor Mahl, made Kaſhmire his uſual reſidence during the ſummer months, and largely contributed to improve its natural advantages. On arches thrown over the canal, are erected at equal diſtances, four or five ſuites of apartments, each conſiſting of a ſaloon, with four rooms at the angles,

where

where the followers of the court attend, and the ſervants prepare ſherbets, coffee, and the Hookah. The frame of the doors of the principal ſaloon, is compoſed of pieces of a ſtone of a black colour, ſtreaked with yellow lines, and of a cloſer grain and higher poliſh than porphiry. They were taken, it is ſaid, from an Hindoo temple, by one of the Mogul princes, and eſteemed of great value.

The canal of the Shalimar is conſtructed of maſonry as far as the lower pavillion, from whence the ſtream is conveyed through a bed of earth, in the centre of an avenue of ſpreading trees, to the lake, which, with other ſtreams of a leſſer note, it ſupplies and refreſhes. The other ſides of the lake are occupied by gardens of an inferior deſcription; though two of them, the property of the government, deſerve a diſtinct notice for their ſize and pleaſant appearance; the Baugh Nuſſeem lying on the north-weſt, and the Baugh Niſhat on the ſouth-eaſt quarter of the Shalimar. The numerous ſmall iſlands emerging from the lake, have alſo a happy effect in ornamenting the ſcene. One of a ſquare form is called the Char Chinaur,* from having at each of the angles a plane-tree; but one of them, and a pavillion that was erected in the centre, has gone to decay, as have all their monuments of the Moguls, except the Shalimar, which is preſerved in good order, and is often viſited by the governor, whom I have ſeen there, with

* The oriental plane.

his

his officers and the principal inhabitants of the city. Since the diſmemberment of Kaſhmire from the empire of Hindoſtan, it has been ſubject to the Afghans,* who poſſeſſing neither the genius nor liberality of the Moguls, have ſuffered its elegant ſtructures to crumble into ruins, and to hold out againſt them a ſevere teſtimony of the barbarity of their nation.

AMIR KHAN, a Perſian, one of the late governors of Kaſhmire, erected a fortified palace on the eaſtern ſide of the lake; but the materials have been ſo unſubſtantial, that though of not more than eight years ſtanding, it cannot now with ſafety be inhabited. He uſed to paſs much of his time in this retreat, which was curiouſly adapted to the enjoyment of the various ſpecies of Aſiatic luxury; and he is ſtill ſpoken of in terms of affection and regret; for, like them, he was gay, voluptuous, and much addicted to the pleaſures of the table. There is not a boatman or his wife that does not ſpeak of this Khan with rapture, and aſcribe to him a once abundant livelihood. This governor like many of his predeceſſors, truſting in the natural ſtrength of the province, and its diſtance from the capital, rebelled againſt his maſter.† The force ſent againſt him was ſmall and ill appointed, and might have been eaſily repelled by a few reſolute men ſtationed in the paſſes. But in the hour of need, he was abandoned by

* This event probably happened about the year 1754.

† Timur Shah, the reigning emperor of the Afghans.

the

the pusillanimous fickle Kashmirians, who reconciled their conduct to the Persian, by urging, that if he had remained in Kashmire, he would have converted them all to the faith of Ali and cut them off from the hope of salvation. A Kashmirian must have been grievously embarrassed to justify his conduct, when he ascribed it to any principle of religion; for he is a Hindoo, a Mahometan, and would become a Christian if a priest were at hand, according to the fashion or interest of the day.

The environs of the town, to the east and west, are laid out in private gardens, which, skirting the banks of the Jalum, or supplied with canals from the lake, afford a various retreat of pleasure to the inhabitants. The plane-tree, that species termed the Platanus Orientalis, is commonly cultivated in Kashmire, where it is said to arrive at a greater perfection than in other countries. This tree, which in most parts of Asia is called the Chinaur, grows to the size of an oak, and has a taper straight trunk, with a silver coloured bark; and its leaf, not unlike an expanded hand, is of a pale green. When in full foliage, it has a grand and beautiful appearance, and in the hot weather, it affords a refreshing shade. But I may venture to class in the first rank of vegetable produce, the rose of Kashmire, which, for its brilliancy and delicate of odour, has long been proverbial in the east; and its essential oil or ottar is held in universal estimation. The season, when the rose first opens into blossom, is celebrated with much festivity by

the

the Kaſhmirians, who reſort in crowds to the adjacent gardens, and enter into ſcenes of gaiety and pleaſure, rarely known among other Aſiatic nations. There, all that exterior gravity which conſtitutes a grand part of the Mahometan character, is thrown aſide; and the Turk, Arab, and Perſian, as if fatigued with exhibiting the ſerious and guarded deportment of their own country, give a licentious ſcope to their paſſions.

The valley of Kaſhmire is of an elliptick form, and extends about ninety miles in a winding direction from the ſouth-eaſt to the north-weſt. It widens gradually to Iſlaamabad, where the breadth is about forty miles, which is continued with little variation to the town of Sampre,* whence the mountains by a regular inclination to the weſtward, come to a point, and divide Kaſhmire from the territory of Muzzufferabad. To the north and north-eaſt, Kaſhmire is bounded by what is here termed the mountains of Thibet; a branch, I apprehend, of that immenſe range, which riſing near the black ſea, penetrates through Armenia, and ſkirting the ſouth ſhore of the Caſpian, extends through the north-eaſt provinces of Perſia, to Thibet and China. On the ſouth-eaſt and ſouth, it is bounded by Kiſhtewar, and on the ſouth-weſt and weſt, by Prounce,† Muzzufferabad and ſome other independent diſtricts.

* About twenty-five miles to the weſtward of the city.

† Through this diſtrict lies the paſs of Bember, minutely deſcribed by Bernier.

The

THE Jalum, the weſtern of the Punjab rivers, having received the numerous rivulets of the valley, and the overflowing water of the lakes, becomes a ſpacious ſtream, and is diſcharged through the mountains near the town of Baramoulah, where its current, from the declivity of the land, runs with rapid force.* At Baramoulah the Kaſhmirians ſay Solomon rent the mountains, and gave a paſſage to the waters, which, from the beginning of time had floated on their plains.

ABOUT eight miles to the weſtward of the city, the Jalum is joined by a ſmall river called the Chote, or little Scind, which I was informed by a Kaſhmirian Pundit, ariſes in the Thibet mountains, and is the only ſtream not produced within the valley. Previouſly to the Mahometan conqueſt of India, Kaſhmire was celebrated for the learning of its Bramins and the magnificent conſtruction of its temple. The period of its ſubjection to the Mahometans, is not recorded in any hiſtory that I have ſeen, but we may believe, that a country, containing a valuable commerce and a profuſion of natural beauties, would at an early date have attracted their notice and invited their conqueſt. It was governed in a long ſeries of ſucceſſion, by a race of Tartar princes, of the Chug or Chugatay tribe, until the year 1586, when Acbar ſubdued it: aided more, it is ſaid, by intrigue, than the force of his arms. Kaſhmire remained annexed to the houſe of Timur for

* See Bernier.

the ſpace of one hundred and ſixty years, after which it was betrayed by the Mogul governor, to Ahmed Shah Duranny, who formed it into a province of the Afghan empire.

The valley of Kaſhmire has generally a flat ſurface, and being copiouſly watered, yields abundant crops of rice, which is the common food of the inhabitants. At the baſe of the ſurrounding hills, where the land is higher, wheat, barley and various other grains are cultivated. A ſuperior ſpecies of ſaffron is alſo produced in this province, and iron of an excellent quality is found in the adjacent mountains. But the wealth and fame of Kaſhmire have largely ariſen from the manufacture of ſhauls, which it holds unrivalled, and almoſt without participation. The wool of the ſhaul is not produced in the country, but brought from diſtricts of Thibet, lying at the diſtance of a month's journey to the north-eaſt. It is originally of a dark grey colour, and is bleached in Kaſhmire by the help of a certain preparation of rice flour. The yarn of this wool is ſtained with ſuch colours as may be judged the beſt ſuited for ſale, and after being woven the piece is once waſhed. The border, which uſually diſplays a variety of figures and colours is attached to the ſhauls, after fabrication; but in ſo nice a manner, that the junction is not diſcernable. The texture of the ſhaul reſembles that of the ſhaloon of Europe, to which it has probably communicated the name. The price, at the loom, of an ordinary ſhaul, is eight rupees, thence in proportional quality, it produces from fifteen to twenty; and I have ſeen a very fine

fine piece ſold at forty rupees the firſt coſt. But the value of this commodity may be largely enhanced by the introduction of flowered work; and when you are informed that the ſum of one hundred rupees is occaſionally given for a ſhaul to the weaver, the half amount may be fairly aſcribed to the ornaments.

A PORTION of the revenue of Kaſhmire is tranſmitted to the Afghan capital in ſhaul goods, which I had an opportunity of ſeeing previouſly to the diſpatch, and from the information then received, I am reaſonably confirmed in the accuracy of this ſtatement I have given. The ſhauls uſually conſiſt of three ſizes, two of which, the long and the ſmall ſquare one, are in common uſe in India; the other long and very narrow, with a large mixture of black colour in it, is worn as a girdle by the northern Aſiatics.

A WINE is made in Kaſhmire, reſembling that of Madeira, which, if ſkilfully manufactured by age, would poſſeſs an excellent quality. A ſpirituous liquor is alſo diſtilled from the grape, in which and the wine, the people of all kinds freely indulge.

THE Kaſhmirians fabricate the beſt writing paper of the eaſt, which was formerly an article of extenſive traffic; as were its lacquer ware, cutlery and ſugars;* and the quality of theſe manufactures clearly evince, that were the inhabitants governed by wiſe and liberal princes, there are few attainments of art which they

* The raw ſugar is imported from the Punjab.

would not acquire. But the heavy oppreſſions of the government, and the rapacious temper of the bordering ſtates, who exerciſe an unremitting rapacity on the foreign traders, and often plunder whole cargoes, have reduced the commerce of Kaſhmire to a declining and languid ſtate. In proof of this poſition, the Kaſhmirians ſay, that during their ſubjection to the Mogul dominion, the province contained forty thouſand ſhawl looms, and that at this day, there are not ſixteen thouſand. In Kaſhmire are ſeen merchants and commercial agents of moſt of the principal cities of northern India, alſo of Tartary, Perſia and Turkey, who at the ſame time advance their fortunes, and enjoy the pleaſures of a fine climate and a country, over which are profuſely ſpread the various beauties of nature.

The dreſs of the Kaſhmirians conſiſts of a large turban, awkwardly put on; a great woollen veſt with wide ſleeves; and a ſack, wrapped in many folds round the middle, under the veſt, which may be properly called a wrapper, the higher claſs of people wear a pirahun or ſhirt, and drawers; but the lower order have no under garment, nor do they even gird up their loins. On firſt ſeeing theſe people in their own country, I imagined from their garb, the caſt of countenance, which is long and of a grave aſpect, and the form of their beards, that I had come amongſt a nation of Jews. The ſame idea impreſſed alſo Mr. Bernier, who carrying it further, has attempted, by the aid of ſome proofs more ſpecious than ſubſtantial, to deduce their origin

origin from the Jewiſh tribes that were carried into captivity.

The dreſs of the women is no leſs aukward than that of the men, and is ill adapted to diſplay the beauties they naturally poſſeſs. Their outward, and often only garment is of cotton, and ſhaped like a long looſe ſhirt. Over the hair, which falls in a ſingle braid, they wear a cloſe cap, uſually of a woollen cloth of a crimſon colour; and to the hinder part of it is attached a triangular piece of the ſame ſtuff, which falling on the back conceals much of the hair. Around the lower edge of the cap is rolled a ſmall turban, faſtened behind with a ſhort knot, which ſeemed to me the only artificial ornament about them. You will be pleaſed to notice, that I ſpeak of the dreſs of the ordinary women, ſuch only being permitted to appear in public. The women of the higher claſſes are never ſeen abroad; nor is it conſiſtent with the uſage of any Mahometan nation even to ſpeak of the female part of a family.

The Kaſſimirians are ſtout, well formed, and as the natives of a country lying in the thirty-fourth degree of latitude, may be termed a fair people, and their women in ſouthern France or Spain would be called Brunettes. But having been prepoſſeſſed with an opinion of their charms, I ſuffered a ſenſible diſappointment; though I ſaw ſome of the female dancers moſt celebrated for beauty and the attractions of their profeſſion. A coarſeneſs of figure generally prevails among them, with broad features, and they too often have thick legs. Though excelling in the colour of their com-

complexion, they are evidently ſurpaſſed by the elegant form and pleaſing countenance of the women of ſome of the weſtern provinces of India.

The city of Kaſhmire once abounded with courtezans, equally gay and affluent; but the rigorous contributions of the Afghans have greatly reduced their number, and driven moſt of thoſe that remain into a languid poverty. The few that I ſaw, afforded me much pleaſure by their graceful ſkill in dancing, and voices peculiarly melodious. And here let me obſerve, leaſt I ſhould afterwards forget, that the women of Kaſhmire are ſingularly fruitful, be the government ever ſo oppreſſive, or fortune at all points adverſe, no baneful effects are ſeen to operate on the propagation of the ſpecies, which is maintained with a ſucceſsful perſeverance. I will not preſume to inveſtigate the phyſical cauſe of a virtue ſo copiouſly inherent in the men and women of this country, but will ſimply intimate to you that its waters are well ſtored with fiſh, which is thought to be a generative ſtimulus, and conſtitutes a principal article of the food of the people.

The language of Kaſhmire evidently ſprings from the Sanſcrit ſtock, and reſembles in ſound, that of the Mahrattas, though with more harſhneſs, which has probably induced the inhabitants to compoſe their ſongs in the Perſic, or adopt thoſe of the Perſian poets. Yet in deſpite of the unpleaſant tone of their ſpeech, there is ſcarcely a perſon in the country, from youth to old age, who has not a taſte for muſic.

The

THE Kaſhmirians are gay and lively people, with ſtrong propenſities to pleaſure. None are more eager in the purſuit of wealth, have more inventive faculties in acquiring it, or who deviſe more modes of luxurious expenſe. When a Kaſhmirian, even of the loweſt order, finds himſelf in the poſſeſſion of ten ſhillings, he loſes no time in aſſembling his party, and launching into the lake, ſolaces himſelf till the laſt farthing is ſpent. Nor can the deſpotiſm of an Afghan government, which loads them with a various oppreſſion and cruelty, eradicate this ſtrong tendency to diſſipation, yet their manners, it is ſaid, have undergone a manifeſt change, ſince the diſmemberment of their country from Hindoſtan. Encouraged by the liberality and indulgence of the Moguls, they gave a looſe to their pleaſures and the bent of their genius. They appeared in gay apparel, conſtructed coſtly buildings, and were much addicted to the pleaſures of the table. The intereſts of this province were ſo ſtrongly favored at the court, that every complaint againſt its governors was attentively liſtened to, and any attempt to moleſt the people, reſtrained or puniſhed.

IN the reign of Aurungzebe, when the revenue of the different portions of the empire exceeded that of the preſent day, the ſum collected in Kaſhmire amounted to three and a half lacks of rupees, but at this time, not leſs than twenty lacks are extracted by the Afghan governor, who, if his tribute be regularly remitted to court, is allowed to execute with impunity every act of violence. This extreme rigour has ſenſibly affected the deportment and manners

ners of the Kaſhmirians, who ſhrink with dread from the Afghan oppreſſions, and are fearful of making any diſplay of opulence. A Georgian merchant, who had long reſided in the country, gave me the moſt ſatisfactory information of Kaſhmire. He ſaid, that when he firſt viſited the province, which was governed by a perſon of a moderate diſpoſition, the people were licentious, volatile and profuſe. But, that ſince the adminiſtration of the late chief, an Afghan of a fierce and rapacious tempery they had become diſpirited, their way of living mean, their dreſs ſlovenly, and though of a temper proverbially loquacious, they were averſe from communicating ordinary intelligence.

DURING my reſidence in Kaſhmire, I often witneſſed the harſh treatment which the common people received at the hands of their maſters, who rarely iſſued an order without a blow of the ſide of their hatchet, a common weapon of the Afghans, and uſed by them in war, as a battle-axe. Though the inhabitants of this province are held under a grievous ſubjection, and endure evils the moſt mortifying to human nature, being equally oppreſſed and inſulted, the various teſtimonies brought home to me of their common depravity of diſpoſition, made me the leſs ſenſible of their diſtreſs; and in a ſhort time ſo faint was the trace of it on my mind, that I even judged them worthy of their adverſe fortune.

IN viewing the manners of a people at large, it were at once a ſacrifice of truth and every claim to hiſtorical merit, to introduce paſſionate

paſſionate or fanciful colouring; yet the cooleſt reflection does not withold me from ſaying, that I never knew a national body of men more impregnated with the principles of vice, than the natives of Kaſhmire. The character of a Kaſhmirian is conſpicuouſly ſeen, when inveſted with official power. Supported by an authority which preſcribes no limits to its agents, in the accumulation of public emoluments, the Kaſhmirian diſplays the genuine compoſition of his mind. He becomes intent on immediate aggrandizement, without rejecting any inſtrument which can promote his purpoſe. Rapacious and arrogant, he evinces in all his actions, deceit, treachery, and that ſpecies of refined cruelty, which uſually actuates the conduct of a coward. And it is ſaid, that he is equally fickle in his connections, as implacable in enmity. In behalf of humanity, I could wiſh not to have been capacitated to exhibit ſo diſguſting a picture, which being conſtantly held out to me for near three months, in various lights, but with little relief, impreſſed me with a general diſlike of mankind.

The Kaſhmirians are ſo whimſically curious, that when any trivial queſtion is propoſed to them, its intention and purpoſe is enquired into with a ſtring of futile interrogatories, before the neceſſary information is given; and a ſhopkeeper rarely acknowledges the poſſeſſion of a commodity, until he is apprized of the quantity required. In examining the ſituation in which theſe people have been placed, with its train of relative effects, the ſpeculative moraliſt will perhaps diſcover one of the larger ſources,

from whence this caſt of manners and diſpoſition has ariſen. He will perceive that the ſingular poſition of their country, its abundant and valuable produce, with a happy climate, tend to excite ſtrong inclinations to luxury and effeminate pleaſures; and he is aware, that to counteract cauſes, naturally tending to enervate and corrupt the mind, a ſyſtem of religion or morality is neceſſary to inculcate the love of virtue, and eſpecially, to impreſs the youth with early ſentiments of juſtice and humanity. But he will evidently ſee, that neither the religious or the moral precepts of the preſent race of Mahometans contain the principles of rectitude or philanthropy; that on the contrary, they are taught to look with abhorrence on the faireſt portion of the globe, and to perſecute and injure thoſe who are not incloſed in the fold of their prophet. Seeing then the Kaſhmirians, preſiding as it were at the fountain head of pleaſure, neither guided or checked by any principle or example of virtue, he will not be ſurprized, that they give a wide ſcope to the paſſions of the mind and the enjoyments of the body.

AZAD KHAN, the preſent governor of Kaſhmire, of the Afghan tribe, ſucceeded his father Hadji * Kareem Dad, a domeſtic officer of Ahmed Shah Duranny, and who was, at the death of that prince, advanced to the government of Kaſhmire, by Timur Shah, as a reward for quelling the rebellion of the Amir Khan,

* Thoſe who have made the pilgrimage of Mecca are termed Hadji.

who

who has been already mentioned. Though the Kaſhmirians exclaim with bitterneſs at the adminiſtration of Hadji Kareem Dad, who was notorious for his wanton cruelties and inſatiable avarice; often for trivial offences, throwing the inhabitants, tyed by the back in pairs, into the river, plundering their property, and forcing their women of every deſcription; yet they ſay, he was a ſyſtematical tyrant, and attained his purpoſes, however atrocious, through a fixed medium. They hold a different language in ſpeaking of the ſon, whom they denominate the Zaulim Kham, a Perſic phraſe which expreſſes a tyrant without diſcernment; and if the ſmaller portion of the charges againſt him are true, the appellation is fitly beſtowed. At the age of eighteen years, he has few of the vices of youth; he is not addicted to the pleaſures of the haram, nor to wine: he does not even ſmoke the Hookah. But his acts of ferocity exceed common belief; they would ſeem to originate in the wildeſt caprice, and to diſplay a temper rarely ſeen in the nature of man.

That you may form ſome ſpecific knowledge of the character of this, let me call him, infernal deſpot, I will mention ſome facts which were communicated during my reſidence in the province. While he was paſſing with his court, under one of the wooden bridges of the city, on which a crowd of people had aſſembled to obſerve the proceſſion, he levelled his muſquet at an opening which he ſaw in the path way, and being an expert markſman, he ſhot to death an unfortunate ſpectator. Soon after his acceſſion to the

government, he accuſed his mother of infidelity to her huſband, and in defiance of the glaring abſurdity which appeared in the allegation, as well as the anxious intreaties of the woman who had borne him to ſave her from ſhame, ſhe was ignominiouſly driven from the palace; and about the ſame time, on a like frivolous pretence, he put one of his wives to death. A film on one of his eyes had baffled the attempts of many operators, and being impatient at the want of ſucceſs, he told the laſt ſurgeon who had been called in, that if the diſorder was not remedied within a limited time, allowing but a few days, his belly ſhould be cut open; the man failed in the cure, and Azad Khan verified his threat.

These paſſages were related to me by different perſons, ſome ſtrangers in the country, others, who from the ſtations they held, would rather have been induced to ſpeak favourably. Azad Khan had, in the three firſt months of his government, become an object of ſuch terror to the Kaſhmirians, that the caſual mention of his name produced an inſtant horror and an involuntary ſupplication of the aid of their prophet. Among the leſſer order of his exactions, but which ſeemed to me the moſt unpopular and diſcouraging, is that levied from the courtezans or dancing girls, who are obliged to account for every ſum of money they receive, and to pay the larger ſhare of it to the intendant of the police; nor are they allowed to attend at any feſtival or entertainment, without the permiſſion of that officer.

officer. The rigorous treatment of this claſs of females, which are ever the moſt pleaſing to ſociety from the indulgence granted to them, has here effected a grievous change; for though Kaſhmire is known to abound in fine women, few are now ſeen among the courtezans.

A REVENUE of between twenty and thirty lacks of rupees is collected from this province, of which a tribute of ſeven lacks is remitted to the treaſury of Timur Shah. The army of Kaſhmire, a part of which I have ſeen embodied, conſiſts of about three thouſand horſe and foot, chiefly Afghans,* who had received little pay for two years, and many of them, for want of a better ſubſiſtence, were obliged to live on the Kernel of the Singerah,† or water-nut, which is plentifully produced in the lakes of the country.

IN noticing the character of the governor of Kaſhmire, which is compoſed of little elſe than a blind deſtructive cruelty, you

* The natives of this province are rarely ſeen engaged in a military occupation, from which their genius ſeems averſe; and it is held an eſtabliſhed rule in the Afghan government, to refuſe the admittance of a Kaſhmirian into their army. The common people uſually carry abroad with them in the winter ſeaſon an earthen ſtove, which hanging near the thigh, gives it a ſcorched appearance; and by this mark a Kaſhmirian is diſcovered, ſhould he by ſtealth endeavour to enliſt. The ſling, in the uſe of which they are expert, ſeems to be their favourite weapon, and enables them with little variation to oppoſe an adverſary at a diſtance, and from places of ſecurity.

† The Singerah alſo conſtitutes a great portion of the food of the lower claſs of the natives, and the excluſive privilege of vending it, yields annually about twelve thouſand pounds to the government.

will

will be ſurprized that he is not puniſhed or reſtrained by the court. But when it is conſidered that the approach to this remote province, leads through hoſtile or independant territories, that Timur Shah is equally witheld from diſtant enterprize by the accumulated arrears and conſequent weakneſs of his army, to which may be added the fear of domeſtic treaſon, and a native indolence of temper, a ſufficient cauſe will be ſeen for his paſſive regard to the interiour government of Kaſhmire. Contenting himſelf with the tribute, he is ſeldom diſpoſed to controul the conduct of a remote governor. I am to expreſs a regret, that previouſly to my route, I had not peruſed the accurate and candid memoirs of Mr. Bernier, who ſtands in the firſt rank of writers on Indian hiſtory: yet, ſhould this curſory relation throw any light on his deſcription of Kaſhmire, as lively as it is juſt, by filling up a chaſm, or marking the changes which have happened ſince his day, I ſhall hold it in ſome eſtimation, and conſider any inconveniency which might have ariſen from my journey thither, honorably requited. Mr. Bernier enjoyed advantages which have fallen to the lot of few Aſiatic travellers, and fortunately for the learned world, his talents amply improved them. He travelled into Kaſhmire in the ſuite of Daniſhmund Khan, a favourite Omrah of Aurungzebe, who having a taſte for ſcience and letters, encouraged this ingenious Frenchman to attentively inveſtigate the great variety of its curious produce. He has alſo deſcribed the cauſes of that important revolution, which raiſed Aurungzebe to the throne of Hindoſtan.

As

As he was perſonally engaged in the ſcene of action, and an eye witneſs of many of the principal events, all which are related in a ſimple intereſting language, I earneſtly recommend to you a diligent peruſal of his inſtructive and judicious book. This writer having chiefly aſſociated with Mahometans, who invariably poſſeſs an abſolute abhorrence of the religion of the Hindoos, and being deſtitute of the proper documents for the reſearch, he has not been equally ſucceſsful in his explanation of the principles and ſpirit of the Hindoo doctrines, and it is only in that diſcuſſion I preſume to doubt the opinions of Mr. Bernier. After cloſing this diſſertation on Kaſhmire, you muſt permit me to relate my deſultory adventures in that country.

On my arrival at the city, I was accommodated with an apartment in the houſe of Zulphucar Khan, and ſeeing him of ſo reſpectable a character, and diſpoſed to do me kindneſs, I had reſolved to remain there, but my ſervant, the ſame perſon who had ſet upon me at Jumbo, diſcovered me to the family to whom he knew I had brought introductory letters, and being urgently preſſed, not to ſay peſtered, to lodge at the houſe of a Sheich Mirza, the brother of my Jumbo hoſt, I was forced out of the friendly roof of the Khan, whom I ſhall ever remember with affection and eſteem. His father having filled high ſtations in the upper part of India, at the period of the Afghan and Sicque invaſions, Zulphucar Khan, who was himſelf preſent at ſome of the actions, had acquired a converſant knowledge of the motives that actuated

actuated the different parties; and his remarks on the various events of thoſe times, from which I derived much uſeful information, denoted a ſound diſcerning judgement, little heated by prejudice, or fettered by thoſe narrow precepts which uſually ſway the mind of a Mahometan. He ſtrictly obſerved the ceremonies of his religion, which were performed with an apparent conviction of their rectitude; and, though [illegible] remiſſion of the cuſtomary worſhip of his family, he never remarked or cenſured it.

At Sheich Mirza's, I was received with [illegible] offers of friendſhip, and all that farrago of proteſtation, the common burthen of Aſiatic language, which goes for nothing. The truth was, the brother at Jumbo had repreſented me as a wealthy merchant who would produce great profit to the houſe; and this object deluged me at the firſt meeting with compliments, which commenced with embracing my legs, and ended in waſhing my beard in roſe water. Nor did he ceaſe to load me with a ſeries of diſguſting attentions, until I told him that my buſineſs obliged me to proceed, without delay, to Kabul. The arrival of a merchant from Conſtantinople compleated my relief; for then the Sheick had no leiſure to ſay a civil word to any one, and ſeeing indeed, that my reſidence promiſed no emolument to the houſe, he would without ceremony have turned me out of it, had another Turk appeared.

As there are no karavanſeras in Kaſhmire, commercial ſtrangers

gers are lodged with their brokers, who finding an account in affording ſuch accommodation, are generally poſſeſſed of large and convenient habitations. A Georgian, who occupied the room next to mine, and was a very agreeable neighbour, did not, I obſerved, give a ready credit to my ſtory, which he croſs examined with ſome tokens of ſuſpicion; and one day, having deſired to look at my head, he decidedly, pronounced it to be that of a chriſtian. But he became alarmed, when I cautioned him, in a ſerious tone, to be leſs haſty in forming ſo dangerous an opinion; for he muſt know, that to beſtow ſuch an appellation * on a believer of the true faith, was a grievous offence in a Mahometan country. In a future converſation with the Georgian, he explained to me, and proved by compariſon, that the head of a Chriſtian is broad behind and flatted out at the crown; that a Mahometan's head grows narrow at the top, and like a monkies has a conic form. This Georgian was aſſociated in trade with one of his countrymen then reſiding at Benares, and ſeeing that he viewed me with miſtruſt, the communication of which muſt have had miſchievous effects, I judged it prudent to diſcloſe my true ſtory; premiſing, with an aſſurance, that ſhould treachery or his indiſcretion bring on me any miſchance, his eſtate at Benares would become forfeit, and the perſon of his companion expoſed to puniſhment. This

* Nazarene is a term of bitter reproach among the northern Mahometans.

language, ſupported by a diſpoſition naturally [illegible], enſured his zealous attachment, from which I derived many uſes during my ſtay in Kaſhmire.

THE Dewan, whom I daily attended, ſtill continued his former kindneſs, and agreeably to his promiſe, ſolicited for me the governor's permiſſion to leave the province. The memorial preſented by the Dewan, ſet forth, that a Turk who had come from Hindoſtan, was deſirous of paſſing, with two domeſtics, through Kaſhmire, in his way to Conſtantinople. When this purport was made known to me, I ſtrongly feared its failure; for ſtrangers rarely viſit Kaſhmire for the purpoſe of curioſity or amuſement, and as no ſpecific occupation was aſcribed to me, I obſerved to the Dewan that a refuſal might be expected. The apprehenſion was wholly verified in Azad Khan's ſaying, that the Turks were good ſoldiers, which he then wanted, and that he would employ me in his army. It was in vain the Dewan repreſented the ſolicitude of viſiting my country, whence I had been long abſent, and that little benefit would accrue from the ſervices of a perſon under ſuch conſtraint. He forbade the Hindoo, in a voice that made him tremble, to ceaſe from urging the requeſt, for he had formed an ultimate reſolution.

WHEN the Dewan intimated to me the information, I noticed an evident agitation in his countenance; and though you may ſuppoſe that my mind was ill at eaſe, I forced upon myſelf that

that ſpecies of reſignation which is habitual to an Aſiatic in his day of trouble, and gravely affected to adminiſter a comfort to the Dewan, which was more wanting to myſelf. From that moment, I never ſaw him,* nor did I ever impart to any one the ſtory of my failure, well knowing, that had it become public, no one would have dared to have given me aſſiſtance or even ſhelter.

On revolving the different modes of extrication from this dilema, I bethought myſelf of the Banker, on whom I had brought a draft from Jumbo; and in the courſe of a day or two I applied to him for a paſſport. He very frankly aſſured me of his ſervices, from which, as he was at that time high in the eſtimation of the governor, I entertained ſanguine hopes of ſucceſs, and to obviate the riſque that might ariſe from the name of Khuroe, which had been inſerted in the former memorial, I now took that of Euſuff, a Mahometan merchant, going on a commercial adventure to Peſhour. But on the day when the paſſport was to have been iſſued, as if my evil ſtar had determined to rule, the banker fell under the diſpleaſure of the deſpot, which ſo wholly deranged him, that my buſineſs no longer occupied his thoughts. He had been ſolicited to advance a conſiderable loan to the government, but aware of the riſque of ſuch a negociation, he pleaded inability, and the laſt time I went

* This unfortunate man was I underſtand, afterwards put to death by Azad Khan, in one of his many moments of capricious cruelty.

to his houſe, he was trembling in an agony of fear, from an apprehenſion of Azad Khan's reſentment.*

In treating of the government of Kaſhmire, I omitted to mention, that it had not hitherto extended its apprehenſion to merchants, who, from the wealth which they introduced into the province, were reſpected and even indulged. The obſtacles that ſtood in the way of my departure, now became ſerious, and gave me much anxiety. I was thrown into the power of a capricious tyrant, under a ſemblance alſo, which if diſcovered, might be fatal, and I was precluded by the late occurrence, from a perſonal application to the court. Endeavouring to remove the appearance of chagrin, I intreated the Georgian, who has been mentioned, to expedite my departure, though without communicating any part of the former failures. Only obſerving that the multiplicity of buſineſs, neceſſarily engroſſing the attention of the dewan, of whoſe friendſhip for me he had been appriſed prevented me from giving him further trouble. The buſineſs was undertaken with a zealous alacrity, and by an unremitted attendance of fifteen days, aided by a ſmall bribe, was accompliſhed. Having hired a horſe from a native of Peſhour, who was returning to that city, and taken into my ſervice a Perſian boy, on the 11th of June I left Kaſhmire and my honeſt Georgian friend.

The river Jalum, at the diſtance of ten miles from the

* He was, at a future period, I am informed, put to death by the Afghan.

city,

city, is formed by the hollow ſurface of the country, into a ſheet of water, of ſeven or eight miles in circumference, called in the Kaſhmirian language, the Wuller, which has a gentle ſouthern current, and is gradually contracted as the land riſes.

On the morning of the 12th, arrived at Sompre, nine coſſes, a populous town on the eaſtern ſide of the Jahum, where the paſſport was depoſited and another iſſued. After a halt of three hours, which were chiefly employed in repairing the riding tackle, which was all of cordage, bridle, ſtirrups and girth, I proceeded in company with Mohubullah, the proprietor of the ſteed, and Huſſin, the Perſian boy, to the ſmall village of Markore, a ſtage of ten coſſes. Mohubullah made a good travelling pillaw, of which the bones were picked, and pluming myſelf on having outwitted the governor of Kaſhmire, I went to ſleep in an adjacent moſque with a light heart.

On the 13th, at Hourree Dana, four coſſes, an hamlet, ſituate three miles within the boundary of the province. The night being cool, I had thrown over my bed-cloths a coat, in the pocket of which was depoſited the paſſport; when, in an evil hour, juſt as I was beginning to awake, a thief ſnatched my coat, and made his eſcape. Had the coat been of any other colour than red, it would not, I believe, have attracted the marauder's notice; but a ſpark of vanity, many of which have lighted me into ſcenes of trouble, prompted the purchaſe of this gaudy garment, which before had been

been often ſtared at. I mentioned to the officer in charge of the paſs at the boundary, the affair of the theft and the loſs of the paſsport, to the truth of which Mohubullah bore teſtimony, adding that I was Seid, and it was well known the Seids, never uttered a falſity; Huſſin alſo ſwore by the beard of his father to the truth of the fact. The officer who was a Kaſhmirian heard the ſtory, with a grave countenance, and looking as if he did not believe a word of it, ſaid that I muſt procure another paſsport. Seeing that words made no impreſſion on this vigilant guardian of his poſt, (which it would have ſurpriſed me, if they had.) I ſecretly, tendered him a few rupees,* for his good will. The ſight of the money produced an immediate effect on every feature of his face, which ſoftening into a ſmile of compliance, I moved on.—Our party had not preceded three hundred yards, when, four men were perceived running after us with great ſpeed and, in a loud voice, ordering us to halt. On coming up they ſeized me, alledging I was a ſtate criminal, whom they were directed to convey to the city; nor did I eſcape from their hands, until I had applied the argument, which had before opened the gate, but to a much larger amount.—Huſſin, who had ſeen the

* The Rupee is the current coin of Kaſhmire, and that ſtruck at Moradabad in Rohilcund, is held in the greateſt eſtimation. From the baſeneſs of the ſilver a large diſcount is allowed on that of Kaſhmire. Copper money of the value of a halfpenny and cowreys, a ſmall marine ſhell, compoſe the other currency of this province.

paſs-

paſsport and witneſſed the theft, expreſſed aſtoniſhment at the largeneſs of the ſum, and accuſed me of extravagant folly. But, he did not know the cauſe of my averſion to a public examination.

On the 14th, at Doumbah, fifteen coſſes, a ſmall village dependant on the chief of Muzzufferabad. The limit of Kaſhmire on this quarter is terminated by a low thick wood, the edge of which is skirted by a rivulet, and, on the other ſide riſes a lofty chain of mountains, ſtretching to the north and ſouth, whoſe ſummits are in ſome parts, now, covered with ſnow, a deep tract of which I croſſed. The inhabitants of the Muzzufferabad diſtricts, denominated Bombaus, are Mahometans of the Afghan tribe and inimical to the Kaſhmirians, who, under the father of the preſent governor, had laid their territory waſte. The rumour of another invaſion prevailing, at this time, I was ſtrictly examined, but the management of Mohubullah, with a ſmall donation, gave us an unmoleſted progreſs. The face of the country exhibits a continued view of mountains, on the ſide of which are ſeen patches of cultivated ground and ſcattered hamlets of three or four cottages.

On the 15th, at Nouſere, twelve coſſes, part of the road bended over the brow of a ſteep and craggy mountain, at the foot of which, a river, which here, takes the name of Muzzufferabad,* runs with extreme rapidity; and breaks upon the numerous inſulated rocks that interrupt its paſſage, with a noiſe of thunder.

* The proper name of this river is the Kiſhen Gunga.

On

On the 16th, at Paunch-Graum, ſix coſſes, the road was ſtill more difficult of paſſage than that of yeſterday. The mountain being in ſome places ſo ſteep, that projecting beams are fixed into its ſide, to ſupport a path of planks, for the accommodation of foot paſſengers; horſes are ſent by another track. This path hath been lately repaired, out of the ſavings of charity, by a Mahometan mendicant, who had, alſo, in a recent of the ſame year, erected a ſmall building for the refreſhment of travellers. It being one of the few acts of public benefit, within the compaſs of my knowledge, performed, by this claſs of men, I deem the communication a matter of conſcience; for, too frequent occaſions of reprobating them have already offered.

On the 17th, at Muzzufferabad, ten coſſes, a town ſtanding on the eaſtern bank of the Kiſhen Gunga,* ſmall, but populous, and the reſidence of a chief entitled Sultan Mahmoud, who after dividing the greateſt portion of his territory among the younger branches of his family, reſerved this town, with a diſtrict yielding about a lack of rupees, for his private maintenance.

On the morning of the 18th, I croſſed the river, and joined a ſhaul kafilah proceeding to Peſhour. A ferry boat uſed at this

* The Kiſhen Gunga runs here, to the left, with a courſe nearly ſouth-weſt and falls, I was informed, into the Jalum, among the mountains, at the head of the Punjab. I ſaw many people croſs this river, on an inflated ſheep or dog's ſkin, which, ſupporting the head and breaſt of the paſſenger, is impelled and guided by the motion of his legs.

place,

place, is frequently, by the violence of the current and a rocky ſhore, daſhed to pieces; And being now, in this ſtate, I paſſed over, tho' with much difficulty, a bridge of ropes, about 100 yards in length. A ſtout rope, faſtened to wooden poſts, on either ſhore, has attached to it, a certain number of carved pieces of wood in the form of oxen yokes, with the forks placed vertically; and, the ſides of the yokes being embraced by ſmaller ropes, afford a hold to the paſſengers.—The road from the limit of Kaſhmire to Muzzufferabad tends to the ſouth-weſt and leads over a country, covered with mountains, which are thinly interſected with abrupt valleys.

On the 18th, halted at a moſque, on the weſtern ſide of Kiſhen Gunga.

On the 19th, the kafilah proceeded a coſs inland from the river. The heat of the weather during the day, and the remains of a ſickneſs had ſo enervated me, that I could not walk a few paces, without extreme pain and laſſitude. But, my little wants were, readily, ſupplied by Mohubullah, who procured good proviſions, cooked them, and was my pipe bearer.

On the 20th, at Dunnee, three coſſes, a ſmall village, on the eaſtern bank of the Nhah, a narrow rapid river, which falls into the Kiſhen Gunga. The kafilah remained at this place, until the inhabitants had conſtructed a bridge, which conſiſted of two entire beams, at the diſtance of three feet aſunder, with an interſtice of planks, faſtened by cordage. The performance of this work, a very

tedious one, was chiefly expedited by Sultan Mahmoud, in perſon, who, though an old man, ſhewed a perſevering activity with a great ſhare of good temper. The materials of the bridge, which had been floated from ſome diſtance, having, by the force of the current, been carried below the proper ſtation, we were detained at Dunnee for another ſupply of wood, until the [illegible] moved three coſſes, and halted in an uninhabited valley.

On the 29th, on the ſummit of a mountain, ten coſſes, in the diſtricts of Jiddoon, governed by a Patan chief. In a ſteep part of this hill, where the path, from ſome rain that had fallen, was ſlippery, my horſe ſtumbled; and had not a tree been within reach, a branch of which I caught, I muſt have been thrown down a lofty declivity. This night I experienced ſome of thoſe inconveniencies to which travellers of my deſcription are occaſionally ſubject. My baggage was thoroughly ſoaked by the rain; and water, which had already ſo much annoyed me, was not to be found, nor a ſtick of fuel. Theſe embarraſſments, which made me teſty and much diſpoſed to quarrel with my neighbours, were at length obviated by the active ſervices of Mohubullah, who having brought water and fuel from a long diſtance, prepared a meſs of broth from ſome mutton in our ſtore, which afforded a regale to a very hungry party. The Jiddoon road being difficult of acceſs, is little frequented, and, until the paſſage of our kafilah, had never, I was informed, been uſed by merchants. The common tract lies through the Puckley territory, but the inhabitants of that quarter, notorious

notorious for a fierce and predatory diſpoſition, had lately committed ſo many robberies on commercial property, that the director of our party judged the route too hazardous.

On the 30th, at Manghellee, ſix coſſes, a ſmall town, the reſidence of a Shadee Khan, the chief of Tiddoon. Halted at this place for the adjuſting the payment of duties, and of an eſcort, that had accompanied our progreſs through the country, until the 2nd of July, when we proceeded to Kotillee, a fort in the poſſeſſion of Meimoun Khan, a brother and vaſſal of the chief of Janoul. Halted on the 5th, to compoſe a difference of opinion, that had ariſen among the merchants, reſpecting the choice of a road.

On the 6th, at Nheamut or Enayet Serau, eight coſſes, a fortified village, with a karavanſera, ſituate on the weſtern limit of Janoul, the territory of Gul Shere Khan, a Mahometan of the Afghan tribe. Being told that the merchants would be detained ſome days at this place, for the diſcharge of cuſtoms, and thence proceed to the town of Beer, the reſidence of Gul Shere, where as at many other ſtations, a long delay would be occaſioned, I propoſed to Mohubullah the proſecution of our journey by a nearer route. He gave a ready aſſent to the meaſure, aſſuring me alſo, that his knowledge of the country and many of the principal people promiſed very reaſonable ſucceſs; but he required, as the firſt condition, an implicit obedience to all his directions, and a

reſtraint on that impatience of temper, with which he was ſorry to obſerve I was too much actuated.

On the 7th we left the Serauce, and conducted by a guide through an unfrequented path, we paſſed without moleſtation the Tyrrhone diſtricts, where moſt danger was apprehended, and halted, during the heat of the day, at a ſmall fort[illegible] village.

In the evening, after various alarms, we arriv[illegible] of Kote, nine coſſes, which, with an adjacent di[illegible] by a Nujjeeb Khan. It is to be noticed, that [illegible] ſtands on the weſt ſide of a break of that great ra[illegible] tains, extending along the head of the Punjab, and within which I had travelled, with little variation, from the Ganges to that place, whence I entered the plain country.

On the 8th, at Mourree, five coſſes, a ſmall village, depending on the Harbarry territory, which is governed by a powerfull Afghan chief. We had ſet out from Kote in good ſpirits, enjoying the idea of being liberated from a party obſtructed by conſtant delays, and the hope of making an expeditious journey, through a tract, which was, we now found, expoſed to the incurſions of banditti. But theſe pleaſing thoughts were wholly diſpelled by the intelligence of a paſſenger, who told us, that when he left Kote, a body of horſemen were preparing to follow and plunder us. Mohubullah immediately reſolved to return to the fort, where he ſaid they would be deterred from offering

offering any violence, and having lodged me in a houſe of one of the inhabitants, he went to a neighbouring village, the reſidence of a Seid, who had acquired a great influence in that quarter, and ſolicited his protection, which he informed me by a meſſenger had been readily granted. On receiving this favorable intelligence, I went to the Seid to return thanks for this opportune aſſiſtance, and found him ſtretched on a bed amidſt a grove of [illegible] trees, and ſurrounded with boys, ſome fanning him, while others were gently rubbing his body. Though his manners evidently diſplayed that ſuperiority which the ſuppoſed deſcendants of Mahomet uſually aſſume from their lineage and rank, he was not wanting in a polite civility; nor did he refuſe ſome ſmall offerings, that were preſented to him with much reſpect. The authority of this man was ſo implicitly admitted, that we were eſcorted in ſafety by a ſingle domeſtic, whoſe ſervices were liberally rewarded. Fear produces in the mind ſtrong effuſions of an apparent generoſity and gratitude, and when ſkilfully wrought on by the man of the world, ſeldom fails to yield him an ample harveſt. It is a ſevere reflection on humanity, ſays Bruyere, that the diſpoſition of man is ever the moſt effectually meliorated in the hour of calamity. At Mourree we received intelligence, that a Peſhour kafilah, had a few hours before departed on its way home, which gave us great joy, eſpecially to Mohubullah, who now ſaw the near proſpect of a concluſion to the perilous taſk he had undertaken.

ON

On the morning of the 9th, before day light, we left Mourree, and after travelling ſome hours through a wild and gloomy tract, on which the turn of my mind, threw perhaps, an additional ſhade, and encountering many ill-looking fellows, who viewed us with a keen eye, we joined the Peſhour party, where we experienced from the countrymen of Mohubullah, every token of welcome.

At noon arrived at Hyder Bunghee, nine coſſes, a populous village dependant on Attock, the principal town of a ſmall diſtrict, which acknowledges the ſupremacy of Timur Shah. The chief, an Afghan, yields an obedience conformable to the motions of that prince, or the leading motives of the day; but, when deſtitute of other reſource, he furniſhes a tribute of about fifty thouſand rupees.

On the 10th, at Bazzar, five coſſes, a ſmall village, at the diſtance of three quarters of a mile from the weſtern ſhore of the river Indus,* which we croſſed about twenty miles above the town of Attock. The ſtream, though not agitated by wind, was rapid with a rough undulating motion, and about three quarters of a mile, or a mile in breadth, where it was not interrupted by iſlands; and having, as nearly as I could judge, a weſt and by ſouth courſe. The water was much diſcoloured by a fine black

* In the Perſian language, uſually called the Ab or Water of Scind, and ſometimes Neil Ab or Blue Water; and by the Hindoos Scind and Attock.

ſand,

ſand, which, when put into a veſſel, quickly ſubſided. It was ſo cold, from (I apprehend,) a large mixture of ſnow, then thawed by the ſummer heats, that in drinking it, my teeth ſuffered a violent pain. In our boat were embarked ſeventy perſons, with much merchandize and ſome horſes. This unweildy lading, the high ſwell of the current, and the confuſion of the frightened paſſengers made the paſſage dangerous and very tedious.

The Indus forms a ſtrong barrier to Hindoſtan on the weſt, and it ſeems a manifeſt truth, that had the Indians made their grand ſtand on the banks of this river, at the period of the Tartar, Afghan, and Perſian invaſions, their empire might have made a powerful reſiſtance. Armies at all times have ſuſtained difficulties and damage in croſſing the Indus, but the attempt to force its paſſage muſt be arduous and full of danger.

The road from Muzzufferabad, tending to the ſouth-weſt, led me through the mountains, into the upper part of the Punjab, at Nheamut Serau; from which place to Kote, are ſeen ſome ſcattered hills; but thence, the country is plain and thinly wooded. The inhabitants, chiefly Afghans, or as they are called, in India, Patans, live in ſmall forts or walled villages, and entertain ſuch mutual dread and diſtruſt of each other, that a ſingle traveller is a rare object. The depredations of the Sicques, on the Attock and adjacent diſtricts, generally ſubject this tract of country to much deſolation, and a failure of rain, in the preceding year, now gave it the appearance of a deſert.

On

On the 11th, at Akorah, a ſmall town. At the diſtance of ſix miles from the great river, croſſed the Attock, ſo called, in theſe parts, from its falling in the Indus, in the vicinity of the town of that name; but, in ſome of the interior parts of Afghaniſtan, it is denominated the Kabul river.* The weather had now become extremely hot; and I was often ſurprized, at my [illegible] with ſcarcely a ſhelter, the force of ſo ſcorching a ſun. I arrived at Akorah about noon; when, immediately entering a [illegible] cool moſque, I ſpread my bed, and lay down much [illegible] In the evening, the time of a common prayer, being [illegible] one of the Mollahs or Prieſts, to prepare myſelf for the ceremony, I urged in excuſe, the debilitated ſtate of my body which prevented the requiſite performance of ſo incumbent a duty; looking at me with contempt, he ſaid, it was the more neceſſary to pray, that I might obtain better health. At midnight, I perceived a perſon endeavouring to take my turban from the bed-clothes, and being caught by the arm, he told me in a faultering voice, that he was the Mollah of the moſque, and, from his ſpeech, I believe, the man who had reprehended my neglect of prayer. What think you, my friend, of theſe Mahometans, who, if they waſh and pray at the five ſtated times, abſtain from wine and the fleſh of hogs, and utter a ſtring of Arabic ejaculations which they do not underſtand, believe that they have procured the divine licence

* Its courſe lying within ſix miles to the ſouth-eaſt of that city.

to

to violate the laws of juſtice. This opinion is not formed on the moment; but has ariſen from long experience and the intimate intercourſe, which my various occupations in India have produced; and is now ſo firmly ſubſtantiated by undeviating teſtimony, that it ſhapes my general ſentiments of the Mahometan character. When they daringly commit theſe acts on each other, even amidſt the rites of their religion, what is to withold their attacks on thoſe of a different faith?

THIS day a body of Afghan cavalry encamped in the environs of Akorah, and overſpread the country like a ſwarm of locuſts, devouring and deſtroying wherever they went. It ſeemed as if the land was invaded; they entered in a violent manner, every village within their ſcope, and fed themſelves and horſes at the expenſe of the inhabitants. Such expeditions afford theſe hungry creatures almoſt the only public means of ſubſiſtance; for when inactive, they are often reduced to ſuch diſtreſs, by the blind parſimony of their prince, that their horſes, arms, and cloths are ſold for a livelihood.

ON the 12th, at the village of Peer Pyah, ten coſſes.

ON the 13th, at the village of Kalalah, eight coſſes, the reſidence of Mohubullah's family, where I was treated with much hoſpitality. The male inhabitants of this village, are all proprietors of mules, and employed in conveying merchandize, and from the name of their abode, denominated Kalals.

On the 14th, at Peſhour, four coſſes, a large, populous and opulent city, governed, with the dependant diſtricts, by an Afghan officer, who remits to the capital a revenue of ſeven lacks of rupees. The road from the Indus to Peſhour, has nearly a weſt and by ſouth direction; and the country to Akora is ſandy and interſperſed with ſtones; from thence to Peſhour, are ſeen many tracts of cultivation. The city of Peſhour was founded by the great Acbar, who ſeeing, it is ſaid, the Afghans averſe from dwelling in towns and the occupations of commerce, encouraged the inhabitants of the Punjab, Mahometans, and Hindoos, to reſort to his new ſettlement, where their deſcendants have greatly multiplied. From its well choſen poſition, which unites, by a commercial chain, Perſia and Afghaniſtan with India, Peſhour has become an important mart, and the reſidence of wealthy merchants; eſpecially of the ſhaul dealers, many of whom diſliking the dangerous and tedious route of Kaſhmire, are here enabled to make their purchaſes at a moderate advance on the firſt coſt. I found a ſmall ſociety of Jews at Peſhour, living at their eaſe, and in the enjoyment of an unreſerved protection.

The heat of Peſhour ſeemed to me more intenſe, than that of any country I have viſited in the upper parts of India. Other places may be warm; hot winds blowing over tracts of ſand, may drive us under the ſhelter of a wetted ſkreen; but at Peſhour, the atmoſphere in the ſummer ſolſtice, becomes almoſt inflammable. Yet it muſt be noticed, it favour of its ſalubrity, even in this torrid

torrid ſtate, that the people enjoy uncommonly good health, and are little ſubject to epidemical diſorders. The markets are abundantly ſupplied with proviſions of an excellent kind, particularly the mutton, which is the fleſh of the large tailed ſheep, ſaid to have been firſt diſcovered in South America. Though the city is ſo much frequented by merchants and travellers, it has no karavanſera; and I thought myſelf fortunate in procuring admittance into an old moſque, where I continued for many days to diſſolve in an unremitting ſtate of perſpiration, the mention of which, leads me to an occurrence, that involved me in great perplexity.

At Kaſhmire, a part of my property had been converted into a bill of five hundred rupees, on Kabul, which was lodged in a canvas belt, that ſerved me as a girdle; on examining the condition of the bill, at Peſhour, I found the writing ſo much obliterated by perſpiration, that no one could read, or even conjecture its ſubject; from beginning to end, it had literally a black appearance. The apprehenſion of the evident difficulties which would attend my want of money, in a country where the moſt ſanguine hope could promiſe no aſſiſtance, and the neceſſity of mixing in ſocieties, void of every good or rational principle, occaſionally operated in depreſſing my ſpirits. But the deſire which had originally impelled the journey, and the zeal which had hitherto maintained its purſuit, at length diſſipated theſe

gloomy impreſſions, and in gay colours, deſcribed a various ſcene of future pleaſure.

BEING informed that a kafilah was immediately proceeding to Kabul, I hired a mule, and went to the adjacent village of Tackal, the uſual rendezvous of travellers, going to the weſtward. On my arrival there, I learned, that the great kafilah ſtill continued at Peſhour, and that only ſome horſemen confiding in their ſpeed and arms, had moved early in the morning towards Kabul. A reflection on the predicament in which I then ſtood, the ſlow pace of my mule, which had more the appearance of an aſs, and the repreſentation of the muleteer, whoſe fears prompted innumerable falſities, ſlackened my ſtrong inclination to eſcape from the heats of Peſhour, and after making a fruitleſs attempt to overtake the horſemen, I returned to my lodging in the moſque. Sauntering one day in the bazar, the common reſort of idle, as well as buſy people, I ſaw a perſon, with whom I had travelled from Muzzufferabad to Enayet Serau. We agreed, as our road was the ſame, to travel together, and in the mean time to ſhare the ſame fare. So cordial is the pleaſure reſulting from ſociety, ſo naturally do we cling on each other, whether for ſupport or amuſement, that I immediately looked on this man as an approved friend, and felt a confidence from the connection, which ſet my mind at perfect eaſe. On enquiry into the finance of my aſſociate, whoſe name was Noor Mahomed, I diſcovered, that he poſſeſſed in caſh,

caſh, one rupee; on which himſelf, a boy and a horſe, were to be ſubſiſted until his arrival at Kabul, a journey of twelve or fourteen days; I perceived alſo, that on the expenditure of this ſum, he would ſeek an aid from me. Fully apprized of the danger, as well as inconveniency of diſcloſing the amount of my property, I gravely told Noor Mahomed, that I had then no more than three rupees, which, with his ſingle one, ſhould be placed in a joint fund, and that on it and providence, we muſt truſt until our arrival at the capital. The Mahometan, with a countenance brightening with faith and zeal, exhorted me to be of good cheer; for that true believers were never deſerted in the hour of need.

On the 25th of July, accompanying a large kafilah, in which a portion of the Kaſhmire tribute, inveſted in ſhauls, was conveyed, we proceeded to the village of Tackal, three coſſes, where we laid in a proviſion for three days journey, the enſuing tract of country, for that diſtance, being thinly inhabited.

On the 26th, at Timrood, four coſſes, a fortified ſmall village, ſituate on the ſouth ſide of a range of rocky mountains, which reflected a ſcorching heat on the plain beneath. The inhabitants of this village, genuine Afghans, have little reſpect, though reſiding ſo near Peſhour, for either the perſon of Timur Shah, or his government, which was in ſome degree evinced during our halt. The governor of Kaſhmire had ſent with our kafilah, for the uſe of the prince, four large dogs of Thibet, which were carried in litters, and attended with much care. The keepers had led

led them to drink at a pond, where an Afghan woman was, filling her pitcher, but, on ſeeing theſe animals, which the Mahometans hold unclean, ſhe put it down and by a ſhower of ſtones and abuſe drove the whole party from the place, loudly calling at the ſame time, on the villagers to her aſſiſtance, which ſhe little needed. The Afghans immediately aſſembled and compleated the route of the dogs and their keepers, beſtowing on the Shah, alſo, very contemptuous language, nor were they ſuffered to return to the pond, until eſcorted by the kafilah guard.

On the 27th, at Dickah, eighteen coſſes, a ſmall village, ſtanding on the ſouthern bank of the Kabul or Attock river, which here runs to the right, or eaſtward. At the diſtance of about two miles from Timrood, we entered a narrow defile, which interſects the chain of mountains, lying to the north of the village. At the entrance of the paſs, the Afghans ſtopped the kafilah, and, excepting ſome troops of the Shah, levied a ſmall contribution on all the paſſengers; they receive, alſo, an annual ſum from the government of Peſhour, for permitting travellers to paſs unmoleſted through their diſtrict. In the firſt part of this day's journey, fraught thoughout, with danger and fatigue, the rain which fell in torrents, nearly deſtroyed my papers, and compleated the obliteration of the bill, now deſtitute of mark or token; and I judged it as formally cancelled, as if a receipt had been paſſed for the amount. Towards the cloſe of the day, I was entangled, by my own indiſcretion, in a perilous adventure, the iſſue of which, muſt be, wholly aſcribed

to

to good fortune. When the rain had ceaſed, the heat of the ſun was extreme, and neither ſhelter or water was to be procured. Anxious to eſcape from theſe inconveniencies, for the journey was yet long, and the kafilah proceeded at a ſlow rate, about thirty of us, mounted, and the greater part well armed, reſolved to leave the eſcort. Had I derived the uſes which men uſually do from experience, and reflected but a little on thoſe reſulting, eſpecially in my ſituation, from the *feſtina lente*, I ſhould not have joined this Quixote detachment. We had advanced about four miles, when a ſmall body of Afghans, which had iſſued from the hills and ſtopped us, peremptorily demanded a ſum of money, as a toll for paſſing through their territory. Here I feel myſelf ſenſibly humbled, when, as a faithful narrator, I am obliged to ſay, that our corps behaved in a moſt puſillanimous manner and ſacrificed without fair cauſe, the evident advantage which a common exertion of ſpirit would have given. We were about thirty, ſtrong, and, to the ſight, reſolute good looking fellows; all armed, except myſelf, with matchlocks or ſide arms. On the enemies approach, our leader, a portly man with a large beard and ſpreading muſtachios, mounted on a curvetting ſteed, was ſtruck with a violent terror, which was inſtantly communicated to the party. The mountaineers failed not to augment the conſternation, and, without ceremony, proceeded to the uſual modes of plunder: But, fearful of the arrival of the kafilah, they were prevented from a total capture. Aware of the riſk of this day's journey, I had concealed

my

my cash in two long and narrow purſes, which, in the manner of garters, were tyed round my legs. This arrangement was fortunate, for the Afghans perceiving my reluctance to diſmount, knocked me off the mule, and forcibly opened the different parts of my dreſs; not finding any thing of value, they were proceeding to treat me with violence, when a Hindoo, of the family of the Dewan of Kaſhmire, who had known me in that country, interpoſed his good offices, and propoſed a ranſom for my releaſement. This generous Hindoo, who I hope will undergo no further tranſmigration, unleſs he likes it, exerted ſo much warmth in my behalf and ſpoke ſo urgently to thoſe marauders, that one of them gave him a ſevere blow on the face. He did not, however deſiſt, but by an active perſeverance, ſupported by a ſmall ſum of money, he accompliſhed his purpoſe. At the cloſe of this affair, I had mounted my mule and was rejoicing at the eſcape, when I received a ſmart blow on my back; and turning about, an Afghan, who had taken this mode of attracting my notice, told me, with an exulting laugh, that our party might now move on, as the kafilah was in ſight, but directed us, if the ſafety of our lives was regarded, not to join it until it ſhould have paſſed the place of action. This injunction was ſpeedily obeyed by me and ſome others; but our doughty commander, ſeeing the near proſpect of relief, began to utter many bold words, and ſhew a diſpoſition of recovering his property and honor by an aſſault of the Afghans; who roufed at the menace, though the kafilah was cloſe at hand, drew their daggers

daggers, and advanced their ſhields, daring him to battle and to fight for what he had loſt. The cautious officer, again, qualified his wrath; but he reprobated them in very ſpirited language, and denounced a ſevere vengeance on ſome fitter occaſion. In the latter part of the journey, an Hindoo, who had gone about a quarter of a mile from the party, was plundered of property to the amount of four hundred rupees, by a ſmall body of theſe robbers who had made a ſudden deſcent from the hills, and before aſſiſtance could be given, ſecured the booty. It was with much pleaſure, after the peril and toil of the day, I ſaw the Kabul river and the ſmall village of Dickah, where we halted. The ſtage from Timrood to Dickah, uſually called the Hyber-paſs, being the only one in which much danger is to be apprehended from banditti, the officer of the eſcort gave orders to his party to quit the kafilah, and march early on the next morning. This opportunity, at once offering ſafety and expedition, was not to be foregone; yet, the muleteer was with great difficulty perſuaded to embrace it, and but for the interference of Noor Mahomed, who was obliged to beat him into compliance, I muſt have attended the tedious progreſs of the kafilah. Before I quit this ſtation it is neceſſary to lay before you a brief account of the tribe of Afghans, through whoſe diſtrict we had now paſſed.

You will naturally be ſurprized, that a ſmall body of people reſiding near the capital of an extenſive empire, ſhould not have been reſtrained from infeſting one of its moſt public roads. The

lawleſs conduct of this ſect of Afghans, who are known in this country by the name of Hybers, originates chiefly in the imbecility of Timur Shah's government, and his want of military ſpirit. They are ſtrongly aided alſo in the purſuit of a free-booting life, by the ſituation of their country, which forms a chain of rocky mountains, whoſe ſcanty ſlips of valley afford but the coarſeſt proviſion for human wants. This rude race of men have made ſo ſlow a progreſs in civilization, that the greateſt part of them, like the ſtoried Troglodites of old, dwell in caves, or rather in the fiſſures of rocks. Though profeſſing the Mahometan religion, they are little more verſed in it than believing Mahomet to be their prophet, that he had four diſtinguiſhed friends, and that the Perſians, with the whole ſect of Ali, are a miſcreant race of infidels. The Hyber dialect is founded on the common language of the Afghans, but harſhly guttural, and is ill underſtood by the adjacent tribes. Timur Shah, who uſed formerly to paſs the winter at Peſhour, which is there much milder than at Kabul, never paſſed through the territory of the Hybers, without their attacking his advanced or rear guard. An Armenian, with whom I was acquainted in travelling from Moultan towards Kabul, arrived at Peſhour, where taking alarm at the perils of the Hyber-paſs, he returned to Moultan, a journey of three weeks, thence he proceeded to Kundahar, a month's journey, from which place it is a diſtance of fifteen days to Kabul; making in all, a paſſage of nine weeks, which

which is usually performed by the Hyber-track in eleven days. This fact, at the same time that it marks the caution and patience of an Armenian, explains the dread entertained of the Hybers.

On the 28th, before day break, having joined the party that had escorted the kafilah, we left Dickah, and, at the distance of seven cosses, halted near the village of Bissouly, to dry our baggage, which had been exposed all the morning to a heavy rain. In moving again, we experienced many obstacles from the extreme darkness of the night, and the numerous currents of water, which suddenly produced by the rains, poured from the hills with extreme impetuosity; carrying with them stones of a vast size, whose rolling noise resembled thunder. It was midnight, the sky was overcast with black clouds, and the roaring of the torrents heard on all sides, created in my mind a certain horror mingled with awe, and I was involuntarily led to consider this grand scene of nature with sentiments of profound reverence.

On approaching a rivulet, which had been greatly enlarged by the rain, our chief dispatched first, that she might not be incommoded by the crowd, one of his favourite women, who, though mounted on a strong horse, had no sooner entered the stream, than she was swept away by its force and drowned. This event occasioned an immediate halt, and very sensibly afflicted our leader, who threw himself on the ground, and loudly lamented the fate of his mistress. At day break, the body was found on the shore, co-

vered with mud, and after interring it with ſuch ceremonies as the occaſion admitted, our party croſſed the ſtream, now reduced to a ſmall ſize.

On the 29th, at Jillalabad,* twelve coſſes, formerly a town of great note, and though now much decayed, ſtill ſupporting a moderate traffic. It has a public market, and the adjacent diſtrict produces a coarſe ſugar. Yeſterday the country was open and fertile; to day the road led over a barren tract, interſperſed with hills.

On the 30th, at the village of Balabaugh, eight coſſes.

On the 31ſt, at the village of Gundamouck, ten coſſes; about three miles to the eaſtward of Gundamouck, croſſed a ſmall fordable river,† running to the ſouthward or right, over which are the remains of a bridge built of bricks. The air, hitherto hot, had aſſumed at this place a ſudden coldneſs; not effected by any change of weather, but agreeably to the obſervation of travellers, peculiar to the climate of this part of the country. The ſhortneſs of our ſtay would not permit an inquiry into the cauſe of this quick tranſition, nor could any of my aſſociates, though uſed to the road, give a reaſonable account of it. Paſſengers, I believe, throughout Aſia, make journies merely from motives of profit or conveniency, ſometimes of religion. A deſire of knowledge, or

* The Attock river runs about two miles to the northward of the town.

† I imagine it falls into the Attock river at ſome ſhort diſtance.

even

even pleaſure, rarely carries them abroad; and they move from one ſtage to another, without deviating an unneceſſary footſtep. Yet they are minutely ſkilled in the rates of proviſions at all the markets, and, whether the place is a hot or a cold one, farther they know not, nor do they ever aſk. Near the village of Gundamouck is ſeen a white ſtone, ſaid to reſemble the head of an elephant, and I believe, that which the Perſians term the Sung Suffede.* The air, in this quarter, muſt have been ſtrongly impregnated with nitrous parti'es, for all the expoſed parts of my body became covered with a white ſcaly ſubſtance, of a ſaline taſte, which in a ſhort time excoriated the outer ſkin.

On the 1ſt of Auguſt, at Baracow, a ſandy uninhabited valley, ten coſſes. The officer of the eſcort, proceeding this day to Kabul with thoſe that were well mounted, our party was reduced to a ſmall number. We remained, during the noon heat, at Juggid Ali, where I think there is only one houſe, which ſtands under the ſhade of a few trees, and where it is ſaid, the wind continues to blow with violence during the whole year. Its force did not abate during our ſtay, and if ſuch is its uſual rate, Æolus, had he lived in our day, would at leaſt have choſen Juggid Ali for one of his country ſeats. Noor Mahomed, whom I ſuppoſe you have loſt ſight of, believing that my money was now expended, or that I would not advance more,

* Signifying in the Perſic a white ſtone.

had

had for ſome time treated me with neglect, almoſt inſult, and in deſpite of his former aſſurance, that zealous Mahometans were never abandoned, we ſhould have felt extreme diſtreſs, had he not borrowed a little caſh from a horſe dealer, and I from the private fund.

On the 2d of Auguſt we commenced our journey, that day a long one, at three o'clock in the morning, and in aſcending a high ſteep hill, which forms one ſide of the valley of Baracow, the tackle of my mule broke; when I, the animal and baggage, rolled rapidly to the bottom. In my way down, I roared out with vehemence for aſſiſtance, but every perſon being engaged in more intereſting buſineſs, no notice was taken of my clamours. My ſituation would have been very comfortleſs, had I not perceived Noor Mahomed paſſing cloſe by me, whoſe help I earneſtly intreated. After a long heſitation, and a hearty curſe which I bore with patience, he conſented to ſtay, and having aſſiſted in collecting my ſcattered garments, and repairing the mule's tackle, we proceeded together. During a ſmart debate, in which his illiberal conduct and my ill luck were keenly reprobated, it was found that we had ſtrayed from the path. But the effects of a mutual fear, ſoon abſorbed the late grievance, and united our exertions in diſcovering the right path, which was found after much groping.

Crossing a range of rocky hills, which extends with little intervention of valley for the ſpace of about eight miles, we entered a wide

a wide plain well watered and interſperſed with walled villages. The Kabul river runs through this plain, over which, at the diſtance of four or five miles to the ſouthward of the city, is a bridge * built of bricks. On our approach to the capital, an active ſcene of perſonal decoration took place, yet in a faſhion very different from that of the beaus of Europe. Inſtead of powdering and curling the hair of the head, a Mahometan is there cloſe ſhorn, and ſo far from thinking that beauty is imparted by a ſmooth chin, he meaſures the comelineſs of his countenance, even the extent of honour, by the length and breadth of his beard.† It is no uncommon oath in this country to ſwear by the beard; and to call a man *bad reiſh*, or bad beard, is held a bitter reproach, but petit maitres are not wanting among the Mahometans, eſpecially in the exhibition of the beard; and though they do not apply to it marechale powder or pomade divine, it is clipped into ſome favourite ſhape with much nicety, and ſhould the natural hue be not liked, it is ſtained with a ſhining black colour,‡ which laſts a long time. Imagining from the behaviour of Noor Mahomed, that I ſhould not ſee him again, and wiſhing to make a final trial of his diſpoſition, I deſired him to fix ſome period for the payment of his debt, which a fair and very ſhort account ſtated at

* Called Byramy.

† The Perſians, Afghans, and moſt of the natural Turks, encourage the growth of the beard; while the Indian Mohometans, Patans excepted, ordinarily ſhave it.

‡ This dye is compoſed of indigo, and the leaves of the henna ſhrub.

five

five ſhillings. He obſerved with much indifference, that the road was an improper place for the adjuſtment of accounts, and that he would take ſome future occaſion for the purpoſe.

In the evening I arrived at Kabul, fifteen coſſes, the capital of the Afghan empire; and, after a long ſearch, found a Georgian, for whom I had brought a letter of introduction, from his countryman at Kaſhmire; having read the letter, he made me an offer of half his appartment, and ſuch aſſiſtance as a ſtranger might need. This acceptable tender was embraced with little circumlocution, and I was immediately received into a meſs, which then conſiſted of Bagdaſir the Georgian, and the Armenian whom I mentioned to have made the circuitous route from Peſhour to Kabul. My hoſt reſided in a karavanſera, once paid by foreign traders, and had paſſed twenty years of his life at Kabul. My firſt care was to diſcloſe to him the injured ſtate of my bill; at which he ſhook his head, obſerving, that as no letter in it ſeemed legible, it was not to be expected men would come forward in a buſineſs, that would in any ſhape, take money from them. The Merchants of Kabul, he ſaid, differed much in their mode of dealing, from thoſe of India, and with difficulty, were brought to diſcharge payments demanded on the cleareſt authority, much leſs on a plea ſo equivocal as that of mine. The truth of this reaſoning was on the next day fully proved, for not a merchant of the city, and all were applied to, would even attempt to decypher the paper, when he underſtood it

containec

contained an order of payment. This event ſenſibly affected my future progreſs, and I feared would detain me at Kabul until clearer credentials were obtained. Another occurrence befell me at this time, of a much more trivial nature; but as it ſerves to pourtray perhaps a national character, may deſerve a notice.

The muleteer, who had accompanied me from Peſhour, charged me with having given him a counterfeit rupee on the road, and now required its exchange. He had before made known to me his ſuſpicion of this piece of money, which one of the paſſengers had given him, and had ſolicited my interference for redreſs. When I recounted this fact, reprobating alſo the ſhameleſs fraudulency of the attempt, the boy, for he was not more than ſixteen years of age, daringly told me to ſpare my words and pay the money, or he would prefer a double complaint againſt me, and make oath to the kazzi, that none of the mule-hire had been paid; though himſelf had witneſſed the advance of half the hire at Peſhour. His youthful appearance, and ſo intrepid a declaration, united in ſtriking me with horror; and I inſtantly put my hand to my purſe to prevent his purpoſe, when Bagdaſir, who had heard our diſcourſe, inſiſted that no money ſhould be paid without an order from the judge. They went to that officer's court, where the muleteer, without a wince, made oath to the truth of his demand, which was forthwith paid

by Bagdaſir, who returned croſſing himſelf, and congratulated my eaſy eſcape from the clutches of a young incarnate devil.

By ſleeping in the open air I imagine, and on nitrous ground, a fever, accompanied with an ague, ſeized me a few days after my arrival at Kabul, the effects of which were ſingularly violent. The fever, during its continuance, cauſed a delirious ſtupefaction, and created an inſatiable thirſt, which frequently relieving by draughts of extremely cold water, it ſeemed at once to guſh from every pore, and drenched me in profuſe perſpiration. When the fit of ague commenced, my bed-cloths, with thoſe of Bagdaſir, and all the horſe-covering that could be procured, were heaped on me, but to little purpoſe; for I lay in the ſtate of the damned, if ſuch can be formed by human idea, until the paroxyſm had wreaked its vengeance. My body was filled with ſpots of a very bright colour, ſhaded between purple and crimſon, which I ſhould have beheld with pleaſure, thinking that ſuch eruption would diminiſh the diſeaſe, had not an Armenian pronounced them a ſymptom of the plague. This opinion gave a common alarm; and though no alteration appeared in the conduct of Bagdaſir, it operated ſtrongly on the fears of my neighbours, and they were diſpoſed to exclude me from their quarter, when I confidently aſſerted that the fever of the plague always produced its criſis in three days. Seeing that I had endured ſeven, and preſerved a briſk flow of ſpirits, their apprehenſion was much allayed, and the ſcheme of baniſhment ſet aſide.

ENDEA-

ENDEAVOURING one day to look through the tube of my tobacco-pipe with my right eye, the left being closed, I perceived it to be wholly without sight. This was a mortifying event, and that my ills might be more grievous, I was afflicted with a spitting of blood. Bagdasir now called in a doctor of physic, who after pronouncing me in a deplorable state, and that little short of a miracle could save me, undertook the cure, through the medium of some medicine only known, he said, to himself, and which had never failed of success. Entertaining from the discourse of my physician, but a slender opinion of his ability, I used, under different pretences, to send Bagdasir out of the room, and disposed of the medicine where no injury could be done. The disorder having directed its full force against me for the space of twenty days, began, as if wearied with the exertion, to abate, and in a short time it wholly ceased, but my frame was so shattered and my nerves so much relaxed, that I could scarcely crawl about, and the least noise produced a violent tremor. In the course of my illness I was visited by many of the Armenians, and one of them, a zealous devotee, desired me to swallow some small rolls of paper, on which were written certain mysterious words, infallible, he said, in their effects, upon the bodies of pious christians.

I EXPRESSED my thanks to this dealer in spells, and readily agreed to take his dose, should Bagdasir who was my absolute director, give assent. On an investigation into their virtue, he permitted me, though with reluctance, for he abhorred the Armenian

ſect, to eat them, at the ſame time expreſsing ſtrong doubts of their efficacy. But whether from not being a member of the orthodox faith, as the Armenian urged, or according to the Georgian, from the heretical preparation of the charm, I received no benefit, indeed I grew daily worſe, as the ſickneſs was then in its progreſſive ſtage.

Observing on my arrival at Kabul, a common toleration of religion; that Chriſtians, Hindoos and Jews, openly profeſſed their creed, and purſued their occupations without moleſtation; and aware alſo that the Mahometan character would deprive me of the advantage of Bagdaſir's connection, I had informed him that I was a native of Europe, returning from India into my own country. At firſt I deſigned to take the name of a Frenchman, but the wandering temper of that people, who ſtray into every corner of the earth, made me fear detection; and had I been hardy enough to become an Engliſhman, one of thoſe who have abſorbed the Mahometan power in India, and in this country have obtained a ſuperior military reputation, I ſhould perhaps at this day, have been a bombadier in the corps of Timur Shah's artillery. To avoid theſe riſques, I denominated myſelf a Spaniard.

It was with much ſatisfaction I ſaw the road from Kabul to Perſia open, and a fair proſpect of performing the journey into Europe, by the route which I had originally propoſed. Two Armenian travellers, who had gone by ſea from Aſtracan to Ure Gunje, a Tartar ſtation on one of the rivers at the head of the Caſpian,

Caſpian, and thence to Kabul, by the road of Bochara and Balk, were earneſt in perſuading me to purſue their tract as the ſhorteſt and moſt free from danger. Yet in this ſcheme were ſome eſſential defects. The Perſian language, on which was founded my chief ſupport, would in this route render me little uſe, I learned alſo that the winter of Bochara was ſevere and long, that the Ure Gunje river, continued frozen until the month of March, and that no Ruſſian veſſel came there before May; though a journey from Kabul to the northern ſhore of the Caſpian, by the way of Tartary, might be performed in two months and a half, yet by winding at Bochara, and the eventual delays of procuring a paſſage by ſea, it did not ſeem probable that I ſhould reach Aſtracan before the enſuing June. This reaſon, with the diſlike of viſiting a country now barren of events or of any grand object of curioſity, determined me to enter Perſia, where a knowledge of the language would aſſiſt in extending reſearch, as well as combat with more probable ſucceſs, the difficulties incident to my ſituation.

Having too fully, I fear, expatiated on perſonal concerns, I will now purſue the more uſeful tendency of this letter, and inform you that Kabul, the reſidence of Timur Shah and the capital of his dominion, is a walled city of about a mile and a half in circumference, and ſituated on the eaſtern ſide of a range of two united hills, deſcribing generally the figure of a ſemicircle. The fortification, which is of a ſimple conſtruction, with

with ſcarcely a ditch, and the houſes built of rough ſtones, clay, and unburned bricks, exhibit a mean appearance, and are ill ſuited to the grandeur which I expected to ſee in the capital of a great empire. But the Afghans are a rude unlettered people, and their chiefs have little propenſity to the refinements of life, which indeed their country is ill qualified to gratify.

FROM the Indus to the weſtern limit of this extenſive territory, there is an invariable deficiency of wood; inſomuch, that the lower claſs of people in the northern quarter, ſuffer as much, perhaps from a want of fuel in the winter ſeaſon, as thoſe of other countries would do from a ſcarcity of proviſions.

BALAU SIR, the name of the Shah's palace, where alſo the houſhold ſervants, guards, and the ſlaves are lodged, ſtands on a riſing ground in the eaſtern quarter of the city, and exhibits but a ſlender teſtimony of the dignity of its maſter. Having noticed what has not been done to decorate Kabul, I muſt not omit to mention the works of Ali Murdan Khan. This omrah, who held an eminent ſtation in the ſervice of Jehanguir, erected, nearly in the centre of the city, four ſpacious bazaars, or market places in a line, which conſiſt of a range of apartments on each ſide of two floors, the lower appropriated to merchants, and that above to private uſe. The intermediate ſpace between the ranges, is covered by an arched roof, and each bazaar is ſeparated by an open ſquare, which was ſupplied with fountains,

tains, but now choaked with filth or occupied by the meaneſt order of mechanics. Ali Murdan has left behind him many monuments of liberality and taſte; the grandeſt, though now in ruins, is ſeen in the vicinity of Dehli, and diſplays at once a deſign, uſeful and magnificent.

During the ſplendid æra of Dehli, when it covered according to popular tradition, a ſpace of twenty miles, the inhabitants who reſided at a diſtance from the Jumna, which ſkirted only one of its angles, experienced much difficulty in procuring river water, that of the wells not being eſteemed ſo ſalubrious. Ali Murdan, deſirous of relieving this common grievance, ſurveyed the land to the weſtward, and ſaw that a ſluice, opened from the Jumna, where that river approaches Karnal, would from the declivity of the ground, introduce water into the back part of the city and conduct it through all the quarters. The deſign was put in execution, and, to reward his ſucceſs and preſerve the work in good condition, Ali Murdan was veſted with the privilege of levying a certain tax, on thoſe houſes which enjoyed the uſes of the canal. Water was conveyed by this branch of the Jumna, forming a diſtance of more than one hundred miles and afforded a commodious ſupply to all the inhabitants; nor, did the canal fall into decay, until the period of the Perſian and Afghan invaſions. Ali Murdan, who in his taſte and diſpoſition would not have diſgraced the Roman Lucullus, beſtowed on the public numerous edifices and gardens; one of which thickly ſhaded with

cypreſs

cypreſs trees, ſtands in the environs of Peſhour, and another at Nimlah, a ſmall village lying about eighty miles to the ſouth-eaſt of Kabul, on the Peſhour road.

A RESPECT for the memory of this omrah has, perhaps led me into too wide a deviation from which I will now return, and inform you that the diſtricts of Kabul abound in excellent proviſions, and that its market is arranged in a neater manner and more like that of an European town, than any I have ſeen in Aſia. The fruits are of a good kind and in great plenty, as apples, pears, peaches, pomegranates and a variety of grapes.

THIS quarter of Afghaniſtan, poſſeſſing but few Indian productions, receive ſugars and cotton cloths, chiefly from Peſhour, whither it ſends iron, leather and tobacco. To Kandahar it exports iron, leather and lamp oil, whence there turns are made in ſundry manufactures of Perſia and Europe, with a large ſupply of melons of an excellent ſort. The Tartars of Bochara, bring to Kabul the horſes of Turkiſtan, furs and hides, the latter reſembling thoſe in Europe, called Bulgar, the amount of which is applied to the purchaſe of Indigo, and other commodities of India.

THE adjacent parts of Uſbeck Tartary of which Balk* is the capital, hold a ſpecies of dependency on Timur Shah and maintain a common intercourſe with Kabul. I have ſeen the great bazaar, crowded with Uſbecks, who have the ſame caſt of features as the

* This city is about two hundred miles to the north-weſt of Kabul.

Chineſe

Chineſe and Malays, but more harſh. Among the foreign nations who frequent this city, the Hindoos, chiefly of Peſhour, contribute more than any other to enrich it, by a ſuperior induſtry and knowledge of commerce; and they enjoy under the Afghan government, a liberty and protection, little ſhort of that experienced by the inhabitants of our Indian poſſeſſions. The benefits derived by a ſtate from the reſidence of any claſs of people, uſually enſure to them a ſecurity of perſon and property; but the Hindoos of Kabul are indebted, I believe, for ſpecial indulgence to one of their own ſect, who controuls the revenues of the Shah, and ſtands high in favour. The environs of Kabul are, chiefly occupied by garden grounds, and watered by numerous ſtreams; the largeſt running through the city, over which is a ſmall bridge,* affords a plentiful ſupply of ſalubrious water.

KABUL as has been before noticed, ſtands near the foot of two conjoined hills, whoſe length has nearly an eaſt and weſt direction. Towards the baſe of the eaſtern ſtands, on a flat projection, a fortified palace, which was formerly the habitation of the governors of the city; but it has been converted by Timur Shah into a ſtate priſon, where the brothers of this prince and other branches of his family are kept in confinement. Above this building is ſeen a ſmall tower on a peak, whence the ground riſes to a conſiderable height, and is united by a neck of lower land to the

* Called I have ſince been informed the Pool Miſtan.

other hill. From the peak, a ſtone wall extends over the ſummits of the two hills, and is terminated at the bottom of the weſtermoſt by an ordinary redoubt.

THE Afghans are the indigenous poſſeſſors of a tract of country, which ſtretches from the mountains of Tartary to certain parts of the gulf of Cambay and Perſia; and from the Indus to the confines of Perſia. The inhabitants of this wide domain, have no written character and ſpeak a language peculiar to themſelves. They are a robuſt, hardy race of men, and being generally addicted to a ſtate of predatory warfare, their manners largely partake of a barbarous inſolence, and they avow a fixed contempt for the occupations of civil life. Though in ſome of our hiſtories of Aſia, the natives of Afghaniſtan are denominated Tartars, I am prompted to ſay, that they bear no reſemblance to thoſe people, either in their perſons, manners, or language.

CERTAIN territories of Afghaniſtan, were conquered in the ninth century by the khans of Bochara, of the Samani race, and annexed to the Tartar principality of Khoraſan, from whence a ſubordinate chief was deputed to govern at Guizni. But it does not appear that the northern quarter of the country was ſubdued, until the reign of Mahmoud,* the ſecond prince of the Giznavi dynaſty, who compleated the conqueſt of Afghaniſtan. No ſubſtantial tradition of the Afghans or the ſtate of their country is

* He reigned in the eleventh century

found

found on record, until the year of the chriſtian æra, 997, when Sabuctagi, a Tartar officer, in the ſervice of the chief of Khoraſan, who was ſubject at that period to Munſur at Samani,* the great khan of Bochara, having at his maſter's death, ſucceeded to the territory, renounced the Tartar vaſſalage, and extending his conqueſts to Afghaniſtan, made Ghizni the capital of his empire.

The Ghiznavi dominion, which involved a large portion of Perſia and Hindoſtan, acquired chiefly by the arms of Mahmoud, the ſon of Sabuctagi, flouriſhed for the ſpace of two hundred and ſeven years, when it was wreſted from Kuſro, the laſt of the race of Sabuctagi, by the Afghan Mohomed Ghori.† This prince bequeathed to Eldoze, a favorite ſlave, his poſſeſſions weſt of the Indus, which were quickly overrun by a Perſian prince of Khariſm, whoſe ſucceſſor Tillal-ud-Dein, was compelled to fly before the victorious ſword of Zinzis.‡

From the period of that revolution, till the invaſion of Timur Beg, the hiſtory of the Afghans is immerſed in general obſcurity, and little ſatisfactory knowledge of their government has been communicated to us, except by Periſhta, who ſays that in the year 1251, Mahmoud, a Patan, king of Dehli, drove the Moghul Tar-

* The fifth prince of that dynaſty.

† So called from Ghor a diſtrict or principal town, in the northern town in the northern part of Afghaniſtan.

‡ This event happened about the year 1242.

tars from Ghizni, and annexed it to the empire of Hindoſtan. It is probable, that it continued ſubject to the dominion of Delhi, until the expedition of Timur's into India, when the northern quarter of Afghaniſtan became a Tartar province.

As the great empire of Tartary fell into rapid decay on the death of Timur, and no relation being given of the ſubſequent exiſtence of a Tartar government in Afghaniſtan, we may infer that it was ruled by its national chiefs until the year 1506, at which period, Baber, previouſly to his conqueſt of Hindoſtan, ſeized on Kabul and Ghizni, which occaſionally with Kandahar, were held by his poſterity for the ſpace of two hundred and thirty one years, when Nadir Shah annexed them to the dominion of Perſia.

In arranging thoſe heads of Afghan hiſtory, it may not be ſuperfluous to note, that Mahmoud Ghori, bequeathed his territory eaſt of the Indus to a ſlave, whom he had adopted, named Kultub Ul Dein, the firſt Afghan or Patan* king of Dehli, from whom a ſucceſſion of princes of the ſame nation, continued to reign for near three hundred years, and ended in Ibraham, of the houſe of Lodi; who was ſlain in battle by Baber. The materials of this ſketch, which are taken from Shirrifud Dein's memoirs of Timur, Dowe's Hiſtory of Hindoſtan, and private deſultory remarks, will not, I fear, communicate much uſeful information. For the want

* The race of Afghans are commonly known in India by the name of Patans, the meaning or etymology of which deſignation does not ſeem to be aſcertained.

indeed

indeed of any native record, and the ſuperficial manner in which the ſubject has been treated by foreign writers, little ſubſtantial matter can now exiſt for the conſtruction of the hiſtory of the Afghans. Yet the loſs is the more eaſily conſoled, when it is conſidered, that little inſtruction or pleaſure can ariſe to the mind, from reviewing the actions of a race of men enveloped in ſavage ignorance, and ſtigmatiſed even by the fierce Tartars for their cruelty and rapine.

THE Afghans received the religion of Mahomet from their Tartar conquerors, and like them profeſſing the Sonni creed, are avowed enemies to the Schias, or the Sectaries of Ali. Though many of the tribes muſt have been converted at the period of the Ghizni dynaſty, it is ſeen that Timur encountered a fierce body of this nation, whom he denominated infidels. At this day, the Afghans are eſteemed the leaſt correct of the Mahometans in religious obſervances; and few of them are converſant in foreign letters. Their common dreſs conſiſts of a ſhirt, which falls over the upper part of long and narrow trowſers; a woollen veſt, fitted cloſely to the body, and reaching to the mid-leg, and a high turned up cap, of broad cloth or cotton, uſually of one colour, and of a conic form, with two ſmall parallel ſlits in the upper edge of its facing. Bread of wheat and barley, milk, butter and cheeſe, compoſe the common diet of the Afghans; they alſo, in the winter ſeaſon and on a journey, make frequent uſe of a food called croat, which is curdled milk formed into ſmall balls, hardened either by the heat of the ſun or fire;

fire; this, when diſſolved in warm water and mixed with bread, becomes equally ſavoury and nouriſhing. Their butter and cheeſe, are invariably made of the milk of ſheep, which in this country, is ſaid to be better adapted to the purpoſe than that of Kine. The cheeſe I thought of a good quality, though this opinion might have ariſen from my long uſage to a courſe of ſlender diet.

The cuſtoms of the Afghans, agreeably to the curſory obſervations I made, ſeem in all the greater lines, ſimilar to thoſe of other Mahometan nations; with that difference which neceſſarily ariſes from climate, and from the diſpoſition of a rude and polite people. Their women are concealed, though not in a very rigid manner; nor are they ſo much devoted to the pleaſures of the haram, as the Indians, Perſians, or Turks. They avow an abhorrence of that unnatural paſſion to which many of the Mahometan ſects are addicted; and the perpetrators are puniſhed with ſeverity.

The government of the Afghans, muſt ever receive a weighty bias from the genius of their ruler, and the degree of authority he may poſſeſs. But when not conſtrained, as in the preſent reign, by ſome extraordinary power or capacity of the prince, they diſperſe into ſocieties, and are guided by the ruder principles of a feudal conſtitution. Conformably to this ſyſtem, the different chieftains uſually reſide in fortified villages, where they exerciſe an acknowledged, though a moderate ſway over their vaſſals, and yield a careleſs obedience to the orders of government. Rarely any appeal is made to the head of the ſtate, except in caſes which may involve

involve a common danger; when I have ſeen the authority of the Shah interpoſed with ſucceſs.

The land-holders are aſſeſſed, according to their capacity, in a ſtipulated ſum, which is paid into the public treaſury; but as it is known that the demand of a large tax would be reſiſted, the government is temperate and lenient in its treatment of the native Afghan ſubjects.

The armies of the empire are compoſed of a diverſity of nations; but the beſt troops are drawn from the Afghan diſtricts; each of which, on the event of ſervice, furniſh a ſtated quota at a low rate, and look for a greater reward in chance of war. The cities and towns are chiefly inhabited by Hindoos and Mahometans of the Punjab, who were eſtabliſhed by the former princes of Hindoſtan, to introduce commerce and civilization into their weſtern provinces; many families of Tartar and Perſian extraction are alſo diſperſed through different parts of Afghaniſtan. The latter are denominated Parſewauns, the other Moguls;* but they have both adopted the uſe of the Perſian language; and it may not be ſuperfluous to obſerve, that the Tartar† conquerors of India, a deſcendant of whom ſtill ſits on the throne of Dehli, made the Perſian character and language the common medium of record and

* The traders in horſes and fruits, who make annual journies into India, are chiefly of this joint claſs

† The Turkiſh is the vernacular language of that region of Tartary, which gave birth to the race of Timur.

corre-

correſpondence, throughout their dominion; an uſage at this day preſerved in all the Mahometan ſtates of Hindoſtan.

To throw ſome light on the modern hiſtory of Afghaniſtan, it is neceſſary to deſcribe ſome events which were produced in that quarter and in Perſia, previouſly to the invaſion of Nadir Shah.

About the year 1720, an army of Afghans, commanded by Mahmud, the ſon of Meervais, a chieftain of Kandahar, invaded Perſia, and after a ſeries of ſucceſſes, he became poſſeſſed of Iſpahan, the ſultan Huſſeyn with all his ſons, except Thamas Mirza, who made his eſcape, were made priſoners. Mahmud held poſſeſſion of the capital and the ſouthern provinces until his death, when the ſucceſſion devolved on Aſhruff, an Afghan of the ſame tribe, who in the year 1730, continued to exerciſe a ſovereign power in the interior parts of the country. About this period, Thamas Mirza, who had fled from the Afghan arms, raiſed a body of military adherents, and ultimately aided by the proweſs of Nadir his principle officer, made a vigorous attack upon the Afghan uſurper; Aſhruff, maintained ſome obſtinate conflicts with the Perſian army, which was wholly commanded by Nadir, the moſt intrepid and ſucceſsful ſoldier of the eaſt; but he was compelled to yield to the ſuperior genius of his enemy, and in retiring towards Kandahar with not more than a hundred men, he was attacked by a party of his marauding countrymen, and cut off after a deſperate defence.

A pow-

A powerful ſect of Afghans, denominated Abdali, encouraged by the diſtracted ſtate of Perſia, had ſeized on Herat,* a large fortified city in Khoraſan, and were preparing to reduce the province, when they were encountered by Nadir, who totally routed their army; fifteen thouſand, it is ſaid, being killed and wounded, and five thouſand made priſoners. Having recovered the territories, which the Turks and Ruſſians had diſmembered from Perſia during the weak reign of Huſſeyn, and expelled the Afghans, Nadir Shah depoſed Thamas, and entering Afghaniſtan in the year 1737 with a large army, laid ſiege to the ſtrong fortreſs of Kandahar, which was at that time held by Huſſeyn Khan, an independant Afghan chief. The exertions of this officer, aided by the natural advantages of his ſituation, detained the Perſian in the vicinity of Kandahar, for the ſpace of eighteen months. At the ſurrender of the fortreſs and other adjacent ſtrong holds, Nadir made ſo temperate a uſe of his victory, that about four thouſand Afghans, commanded by two of the officers of Huſſeyn, were induced to join his army; and it is mentioned that theſe troops, during the Indian expedition, rendered him eſſential ſervice.

In the annals of that period, I have made diligent ſearch for the name of Abdali Ahmed Khan, the founder of the modern empire of Afghaniſtan; but I have not been able to procure any accurate information of his origin or military progreſs, until he

* Suppoſed to be Aria of the ancients.

ſtarted forth with ſo brilliant a ſucceſs at the death of Nadir Shah. That he was an Afghan there is no doubt, as the fact is fully proved in the perſon of his ſon Timur Shah; yet from Dowe's hiſtory, he has been brought into our notice by the name of the Perſian Abdalli; by various records and oral tradition of the life of Nadir Shah, it is ſeen that he maintained a party of Afghans in his ſervice, and having received in the latter period of his reign, a general teſtimony of the diſaffection and meditated treachery of his Perſian officers, he reſolved to reduce them to obedience, or cut them off by the aſſiſtance of his foreign Troops; among whom, the Afghans, then, commanded by Ahmed Khan, were diſtinguiſhed by pre-eminent marks of favor.

THE aſſaſſination of Nadir, was immediately followed by a furious attack on the Afghan troops, conſiſting of four or five thouſand men; but their intrepid chief, though aſſailed by the whole Perſian army, effected a ſafe retreat into his own country, where, ſeizing on a large treaſure which the governor of Kabul, not yet apprized of the fate of Nadir, had diſpatched to the Perſian camp, and raiſing a numerous force, he was acknowledged the ſovereign of the Afghan territories, by the title of Ahmed Shah. After eſtabliſhing his authority at home, he penetrated into the northern quarters of India, which felt the force of his arm, and long groaned under the Afghan deſolation.

AHMED SHAH having run through a long and arduous military carreer, and acquired even the character of a temperate and

juſt

juſt prince, died in the year 1773, in the vicinity of the new city of Kandahar,* which he had deſigned to be the capital of Afghaniſtan. This prince was ſucceeded by his ſon Timur, who keeps his court in the city of Kabul; to preſerve the foreign poſſeſſions of his father, he made in the firſt part of his reign, ſome deſultory expeditions into India; but on the iſſue of an unſucceſsful campaign with the Sicques, he was compelled to relinquiſh the whole of the Punjab territory. At this day he retains, on the eaſt ſide of the Indus, the principality of Kaſhmire, the diſtrict of Attock, with ſome ſcattered diviſions of Moultan, including the city and the territory of Scind. Yet Timur Shah derives but few real advantages from his Indian domain. Scind at the period of my journey, was in a degree diſmembered from his empire; no revenue had been remitted to Kabul for the ſpace of two years, or any meaſure adopted to enforce obedience. And the governor of Moultan, confiding on his remote diſtance from the empire and the inactive diſpoſition, of the prince, ſhews only that attention to the orders of government, which is moſt accordant with his purpoſes. From this outline you will perceive, that the Afghan dominion in India, does not ſtand on a flouriſhing ground; that under the auſpices of Timur, few marks of its extenſion are evinced; or that it imparts any leading influence in the affairs of Hindoſtan.

* Nadir Shah deſtroyed the old fortreſs of Kandahar, which ſtood on the top of a high rocky hill, and founded on a contiguous plain, a city entitled Nadirabad; it was completed by Ahmed Shah, and is now only known by the name of Kandahar.

RUMOURS wafted from the court of Dehli, have occaſionally agitated our quarter of India, and taught us to believe that Timur with a mighty hoſt, had croſſed the Indus, and was making rapid marches to Dehli, to reſtore the loſt authority of the Moghul empire. But this is an empty tale, framed to raiſe the ſpirits of a decaying drooping court, or amuſe the dreaming politicians of the day. It is indeed, ſo oppoſite to the truth, that the Afghan prince, inſtead of urging a foreign enterprize, ſeems afraid to move from his capital.* At this time a common outcry of the ſoldiery prevails againſt the Shah, for a large failure of military payments; and it appears that ſince the year 1780, when he viſited Peſhour, where he was treacherouſly attacked by a party of diſaffected Afghans, he has ſhewn no deſire of leaving Kabul.†

* Since that period Timur Shah, has appeared in the field and proceeded to the province of Moultan; but his operations, futile and indeciſive, have terminated after much negociation and threat, in a manifeſt incapacity to complete the reduction of a nominal tributary; and having diſſolved the charm that popular opinion had impreſſed on his name, he returned ingloriouſly into his own country.

Note by the Editors.

† Some recent advices from India mention, that in the autumn of 1796, Zemaun Shah, the ſucceſſor of Timur, had invaded the Punjab, and having completely routed the forces of the Sicques, had gained poſſeſſion of Lahore; but was ſoon after recalled from thence to Kandahar by a rebellion excited there, during his abſence, by a diſcontented chief, named Morad Khan. Theſe accounts add that he was ſuppoſed to have ſuppreſſed this inſurrection, and to be preparing to re-enter India with a very conſiderable army.

EXCLU-

EXCLUSIVE of his Afghan and Indian dominions, Timur Shah is poſſeſſed of a large diviſion of Khoraſan, which taking in the city of Herat, extends on the north to the vicinity of Niſhabor and Turſhiſh, and on the ſouth to the leſſer Irak. This prince, whom I have ſeen, is about forty ſix years of age, his perſon is above the middle ſize and rather corpulent; and, for a native of Afghaniſtan, is complexion is dark. In token of imperial dignity, he wears on days of ceremony, a high cap of black velvet, with a top of a quadrangular form.

FROM a want of vigor in the government, a thin population, and the averſion of the Afghans to civil occupations, the revenue of Timur Shah bears an inadequate proportion to the extent of his dominion. In Mr. Dowe's Hiſtory of Hindoſtan, it is ſaid that Ahmed Shah poſſeſſed a revenue of three millions ſterling, and maintained a ſtanding body of one hundred thouſand cavalry. If ſuch was the ſtate of that prince's power and reſources, it hath greatly decreaſed in the reign of his ſucceſſor; whoſe whole force according to the information I procured in the country, does not exceed thirty thouſand men, or his revenue a million of our money.

CAVALRY conſtitutes the chief military ſtrength of Afghaniſtan, which as well from its own diſtricts, as its contiguity to Tartary and Perſia, procures good horſes,* at a moderate rate.

* A ſerviceable horſe is procured at Kabul, from five to ſix pounds ſterling.

A corps

A corps of infantry armed with matchlocks, compoſes alſo a part of the Afghan army; but, as in countries where cavalry is formed of the higher claſſes of the people and denominates military honor and rank, this body is held in low account, and is little ſuperior to the undiſciplined ſoldiery of India; and the Afghan artillery, may without depreciating it, be eſtimated by the ſame ſcale of compariſon. Certain of the brothers of Timur Shah have raiſed occaſional commotions in the government, and one of them named Sicunder, was in open rebellion, but it was quelled without producing any violent effect. This prince who hitherto experiences the obedience and filial duty of his own family, has appointed two of his ſons, grown to manhood, to the ſeparate charge of Kandahar and Herat; both of them live in harmony with their father and are eſteemed by the people.

The remains of a colony of Armenians, which Nadir Shah had captured in his Turkiſh war, and eſtabliſhed in the northern parts of Perſia, whence it was removed by Ahmed Shah into Afghaniſtan, are now reſiding at Kabul. They intermarry with their own women and are allowed the free uſe of the chriſtian religion, which is adminiſtered by a national prieſt. They were attached to the body-guard of the late Shah, whom they attended in his various expeditions; and thoſe who ſurvived, amounting to about one hundred, were ſometime employed by Timur in the like capacity; but, ſince this prince has perſonally relinquiſhed the purſuits of a military life, and neglected

neglected the maintenance of his army, the Armenians have fallen into great penury. They reſide with their families in the precincts of the Balau Sir, and are permitted within a preſcribed limit, to exerciſe diſcretionary occupations. Yet with all the induſtry which the tribe ſo abundantly poſſeſſes, they earn but a ſcanty pittance. In deſpite of this grievance of the gloomy ſorrow preſſed on them by poverty, by a condition of bondage, to which on this ſide of mortality, the moſt ſanguine hope can fix no termination, they evince an unremitting activity in propagating their ſpecies: and would ſeem determined to entail on their race, an equal portion of that miſery, which has ſo largely fallen to their lot.

From what has been already noticed, it were almoſt ſuperfluous to ſay that Timur Shah poſſeſſes little enterprize or vigor of mind. For the laſt ſeven years, he has ſhewn little inclination to military action, or the aggrandiſement of his Empire. It is true, that allured by the hope of acquiring an eaſy poſſeſſion of one of the beſt cities, now remainining in Perſia, he ſent a body of troops to beſiege Muſchid, the capital of Khoraſan; but, the wretched equipment of his army and the ſlow progreſs of the ſiege, which was commenced in the preceding year, equally ſhew a want of ſpirit and ability.

The Afghan government, when viewed as ſtanding on a general baſis of deſpotiſm, and compared with that of other Aſiatic ſtates, is not pregnant with injuſtice or cruelty. Its edicts are

ſeldom

ſeldom accompanied with bloodſhed, nor is it inimical to any ſect of ſtrangers. The foreign and native merchants, enjoy at Kabul an ample protection, and maintain their rights with a ſpirit, rarely ſeen in a Mahometan country. Capital puniſhments are ſeldom inflicted, and though the kinſmen of the Prince have formed frequent conſpiracies againſt the ſtate, his hands are not ſtained with the blood of his family. Such are the virtues of Timur Shah, which were exemplified in various inſtances, during my reſidence at his capital. The ruling vice of this prince is avarice; from a dread of the fierce and untractable ſpirit of the Afghans, its effects are not ſeverely felt in the collection of the territorial revenue; but it preſſes hard on the ſoldiery and houſhold ſervants; on artificers, and on thoſe merchants who unwarily vend their wares to the court without prompt payment. The facts, however deſultory, that have been adduced, do not warrant the opinion that Timur Shah is an object of dread to the bordering ſtates, or that he is juſtly entitled, the comet of the eaſt, who we have been taught to believe, will at ſome unexpected moment, ſhoot acroſs the Indus and the Ganges, and conſume even our remote province of Bengal.

The chief ſtrength of the Afghan prince, I preſume to ſay, is derived from the weakneſs and diſcord of his neighbours. Were the Sicque chiefs not more apprehenſive of a domeſtic increaſing influence, than deſirous of ſubduing a conſtitutional enemy, they would, it may be fairly inferred, ſpeedily extinguiſh the Afghan

government in India; and ſhould the Perſian force be thrown into a body, under the conduct of an able leader, it is not only probable, that the diſmembered diviſion of Khoraſan would revert to its ancient poſſeſſors, but that the Afghans would again feel a foreign yoke.—With an earneſt apology for this long letter, I remain,

Yours, &c.

LETTER XIV.

DEAR SIR,

HAVING in vain endeavoured to procure payment of my defaced bill, I ſold it at half price to Bagdaſir, my Georgian hoſt, who agreed to abide by the chance of obtaining the full amount. God forgive me for doubting the integrity of my Chriſtian hoſt; but, ſome obſcure parts of the negociation, and the exorbitant prices, charged upon ſundry articles which I purchaſed from him, induced me to believe, that he had not played me fair. To throw raſh blame on a man, who had rendered me ſuch eſſential offices of humanity, and who, is cut off from every help of vindication, were a breach of one of the grand bonds of ſociety. Nor had this ſuſpicion been communicated, did it not lead to ſubſtantiate an obſervation I have often made; that a man, though devoted to the ſtrict obſervance of the minuteſt ceremony of his religion, with a mind oſtenſibly fixed on objects lying beyond mortality, who, like the Georgian, loudly chants his morning and evening prayers, and on his beads, numbers a long liſt of martyred ſaints, ſhall at the

ſame time, eagerly graſp at every advantage, which our world holds out to him; nor ſhall he give even farthings to the poor. This covering has happily in the civilized world, become threadbare and flimſy, and except in fanatic conventicles, is ſeldom exhibited with ſucceſs.

HAVING made the requiſite preparations for my journey, and hired one ſide of a camel, on which a pannier was ſuſpended for my accommodation, I joined a party proceeding to Kandahar.

ON the firſt September, at Killah Kazzee, the remains of a fort, three furſungs* diſtant from Kabul. This being a kafilah of camels, which in Afghaniſtan and Perſia, are uſually driven in the night, that the heat of the day and the effects of thirſt, may be leſs felt, we departed on the evening of the 22d, and early next morning halted on a barren plain, five furſungs. The road lay through ſcattered hills of a moderate height, and a country thinly cultivated.

IT is neceſſary to inform you, that I now appeared in the character of a Chriſtian, conformably to the counſel of Bagdafir, who had confidently aſſured me that no riſque would be incurred under ſuch deſcription; and, he expatiated alſo on the grievous ſin of throwing out any falſe colours on the ſcore of religion. But it

* Throughout this quarter of Afghaniſtan and all the dominion of Perſia, the land meaſurement is calculated by furſungs, which may be roundly computed at four Engliſh miles. In ſome of the ancient authors, this meaſurement is termed parſangs, agreeably to the alphabet of the old Perſic in which the letter P is not omitted.

was ſoon ſeen that the exchange involved a multiplicity of troubles. Never perhaps, did the meek and patient member of primitive Chriſtianity ſuffer, among the Gentiles, greater indignity or more bitter reproach; martyrdom only was withheld; and that extremity of Chriſtian honor, I was in perpetual dread of; though without any foretaſte of thoſe comforts, which flow from ardent zeal, or a conſolatory belief that the church would derive either ſtrength or credit from my ſufferings.

THE mode of travelling, which I had now adopted being probably unknown to you, I will give it as it deſerves, a rough deſcription. The camel appropriated to the accommodation of paſſengers, carries two perſons, who are lodged in a kind of pannier laid looſely on the back of the animal. The pannier, termed in the Perſic, kidjahwah, is a wooden frame, with the ſides and bottom of netted cords of about three feet long and two broad, and two in depth. The neceſſaries of the paſſengers are conveyed in the kidjahwah, and the journey being uſually made in the night-time, it becomes the only place of his reſt; for on the kafilah's arrival at his ſtation, he muſt, immediately exert himſelf in procuring proviſions, water and fuel; alſo in keeping an eye over his property to prevent theft. Had I been even much accuſtomed to this manner of travelling, it muſt have been irkſome; but a total want of practice, made it exceſſively grievous. That you may not think my complaints ill-founded, or that I poſſeſs the ingenious though unhappy talent of creating cala-

calamities, I will lay before you a ſimple detail of facts. The box which I occupied, meaſured a length of two feet ſeven inches, with a breadth of one foot and a half; and my height being five feet and nearly ten inches, you will neceſſarily grant that equal addreſs and force were required, to pack me in ſo diſproportionate a compaſs. On reconnoitering the other ſide of the camel, I diſcovered, which alarmed me, an old woman and an infant. My fears indeed were ſoon verified, by the child beginning to cry and the nurſe to ſcold; nor did the alternate ſtrain ceaſe the whole night. Our camel, too, was the worſt conditioned of the drove; and a want of ſtrength made the poor animal ſtumble and very reſtive. His ill properties did not remain long concealed; for, before the party had crept into their ſeats, the camel, which is accuſtomed to receive its burthen, in a kneeling poſture, ſuddenly aroſe, when I, the nurſe and child, with our various ſtock of equipment, fell to the ground in wide confuſion; I then firſt experienced a taſte of thoſe ills, which are attached to the profeſſion of Chriſtian faith, in Mahometan countries.

The camel driver, an Afghan of the rudeſt caſt, reprobated me in ſevere terms as the cauſe of the miſhaps; but, he could expect no good fortune, he ſaid, whilſt in the ſociety of an infidel, to whom, only, were to be attributed the falſe ſteps, and numerous they were, of the camel. With much joy I diſcovered, at the dawn of day, our halting place, where I was relieved

lieved from a complication of diſcordant ſounds, and a cramp which had benumbed all my body.

At Kabul I had endeavoured to procure a ſervant, knowing that in my preſent character, I ſhould ſuffer much inconveniency without ſuch an aſſiſtant. But Bagdaſir was averſe to the meaſure, obſerving that no Mahometan of character would enter my ſervice, and that thoſe who had overcome their ſcruples would rob me. Waving therefore ſo dangerous an accommodation, I commenced the journey, with a reſolution of boldly facing every difficulty; yet to obtain the camel driver's good will, I paid him more than the uſual hire.

On the 24th, in the morning, at Azeeabad, five furſungs. The country, which I reviewed at day-break, was interſperſed with low hills, and generally cultivated. Having now diſtinctly noticed our party, I perceived that Dowran, the name of the conductor, who plumed himſelf on being of the ſame tribe as Timur Shah, had with him a younger brother for a helper, and five camels; three of which carried merchandize, and two, paſſengers. The cargo of one of theſe having been deſcribed, it remains to ſay, that on the other ſat an old Afghan lady of ſome diſtinction, her daughter, very handſome, and two grand children. The dame began an early conteſt with Dowran, but after ſome ſmart ſkirmiſhes, ſhe gained a compleat victory over the driver, who ſat down eaſy under the defeat, by obſerving that

that the lady had ſprung from a noble race, and that the ſhrilneſs of her voice made his head ache.

On the 25th, halted near a ſmall fort, four furſungs. The night air was very cold, and the country preſented the barren aſpect of a bare plain, on which were ſcattered hills of rock and ſand. Dowran's refuſal of all aſſiſtance, on the ſcore of my being an infidel and thereby unclean, obliged me to go daily in ſearch of water and the dried dung* of camels, the only fuel of theſe parts, the kindling of which excited an excruciating pain in my eyes. But having fortunately laid in a ſmall ſtock of biſcuit, tea and ſugar, I ſubſiſted without much labour of cookery. This was I think, the firſt period of my life, in which to uſe a trite phraſe, I had been thrown wholly on my back; for in the firſt part of my journey, I uſually fared better than my companions. My manner was then confident, and the rough plenty of my board, procured many attentive adherents. The reverſe now befell me, I was treated on all ſides with ſuch a brutal contempt, and experienced from a want of every help ſo many embarraſſments, that I grievouſly lamented the diſmiſſion of my Mahometan covering, which I reſolved to take up on the moſt favorable occaſion.

The Armenians, in the courſe of journeying, are neither ſub-

* For the purpoſe of collecting this fuel, kafilas ſeldom move their ſtations

ject to the grievances which affected me; nor do they feel with much ſenſibility the inſults of the Mahometans; and by chiefly travelling with aſſociates of their own nation, a mutual aid is afforded; beſides theſe advantages, they poſſeſs a flexibility of manners, which receives a form from every people with whom they mix. I have ſeen them manage with infinite addreſs, the Hindoo, the Mahometan, and even the Jew; a race whom they affect, on a religious principle to hold in abhorrence; but the grand cauſe of their hatred, is a cloſe commercial rivalſhip. Treatment, at which an Armenian would have ſmiled or endured with profound ſubmiſſion, I ſhould either by my hands, or at leaſt my tongue, have warmly reſented; for though not ill verſed in the manners of the eaſt, I never had ſufficient forbearance to ſubmit to the reproachful inſolence which the Mahometans, eſpecially the vulgar, exerciſe towards thoſe of a different faith.

Dowran, from my aukwardneſs in all culinary matters, and a want of ſtrength to aſſiſt in loading his camels, the only qualities in his mind, conſtituting an uſeful man, conceived a contemptible opinion of me, which he thought could not be more forcibly expreſſed, than circulating a report in the kafilah that I was a Jew. This was a new battery opened againſt me, but having procured the protection of the old Afghan lady, by fondling the children and giving them ſugar, I ſucceſsfully combated Dowran, who had now altogether ſubmitted to a female government.

On the 26th, at Ghizni, four furſungs. This city remained

the capital of an extenſive, powerful empire for the ſpace of four hundred years, and according to the hiſtorian Feriſhta, was adorned by the Ghiznavi princes, particularly the great Mahmoud, with many a ſumptuous and ſtately pile. But, ah! what humiliating ſorrow did I feel, how quickly did every ſpark of the pride incident to humanity ſubſide, on beholding the fallen ſtate of Ghizni! In vain did I look for its "gorgeous palaces and cloud capt "towers." They had been long levelled with the duſt, and ſave ſome ſcattered maſſes of miſhapen ruins, not a monument is to be ſeen of Ghizni's former grandeur. The town ſtands on a hill of moderate height, at the foot of which runs a ſmall river,* whoſe borders are occupied by ſome fruit gardens. Its ſlender exiſtence is now maintained by ſome Hindoo families, who ſupport a ſmall traffick, and ſupply the wants of a few Mahometan reſidents.

At a ſhort diſtance from Ghizni, ſtands the tomb of Mahmoud, where pilgrims reſort from diſtant places to ſay their prayers. But as the religious acts of ſuch emigrants are rated by the degree of labour, length or danger of their journies, we are not to ſuppoſe that the pilgrimage improves either their heads or their hearts: though few moral benefits may accrue to the devotee from his wanderings, he derives from them a conſiderable portion of ſecular advantage. The Mudji, ſo he is

* Its current paſſes to the weſt or ſouthward, but I am not acquainted with its name.

entitled,

entitled, who has made the tour of Mecca, and viſited the tomb of his prophet, is ever after treated with a reſpectful deference, for it is the top of Mahometan faſhion to be religious; and if a mendicant, his ſcrip never wants a ſtore.

In mentioning Mahmoud and Ghizni, it were criminal to omit the name of the Perſian poet, Fardouſi, who in his Sha Namah, hath given us a ſplendid monument of epic poetry, and the pure language of his country. The protection of the great doth not always fall to the poet's lot; nor but rarely doth the public munificence enable him to indulge the bent of his genius. Griping want often drives him to ſeek the hireling's pittance, and even in our enlightened land, we have ſeen the cold hand of penury preſs him to the grave. More propitious was the fortune of Ferdouſi: it gave him an imperial patron in Mahmoud, whoſe praiſe he too laviſhly ſung. And when, for ſome failure of the prince's promiſe, the poet retired into Perſia, his countrymen warmly vied in manifeſting their liberality and applauſe.

The climate of Ghizni is ſo cold as to have become proverbial, and the Afghans told me, that the town has more than once been overwhelmed in ſnow. The road to Ghizni has, I apprehend, a ſouth weſt direction, and is diſtant from Kabul eighty two miles, at the rate of four miles to a furſung. I have been the more induced to notice this fact circumſtantially; as in our maps its diſtance and courſe from Kabul is erroneouſly laid down; ſome

of the French geographers, even place it to the weſtward of Kandahar.

In the morning of the 27th of September, at Heer Ghut, five furſungs. The country is interſperſed with low hills, and produces, except in ſome few cultivated ſpots, little elſe than a prickly aromatic weed, on which camels feed with avidity; and which with paſte of unſifted barley formed into balls, conſtitutes their common food. This animal is peculiarly uſeful in countries where, as in Afghaniſtan, the roads are level, the ſoil dry, and provender, from the thin population, generally ſcarce. The camel even on much coarſer fare than has been mentioned, endures ſevere fatigue, often carrying a load of eight hundred Engliſh pounds; and has ſo tractable a temper, that eight of them faſtened to each other in a ſtring, are managed by two men. When oppreſſed with thirſt on the road, a camel throws from its ſtomach a fleſhy ſubſtance of a purple colour, which either returns a ſupply of water that has been previouſly depoſited, or being put into action in the mouth, yields ſuch moiſture as gives it occaſional relief.

On the 27th, our party halted at the [illegible] wholly; that is, without the previous aſſent o[illegible] inveighed againſt his preſumption with ſuch bitt[illegible] that ſtopping his ears, he ran off the field. [illegible] obſerve, that the places noted as halting ſtatio[illegible] either from ſome adjacent fort, or if in an u[illegible] from ſome peculiar aſpect or quality they may [illegible]

On the 29th, at Meercoot, ſix furſungs. The air had become now ſo cold, that at this period of the year, and in a latitude between thirty-four and thirty-five, the water which was ſuſpended in a copper veſſel from my camel, became ſolidly frozen during the night.

On the 30th, at Muſhiedah, in a deſert, ſix furſungs. In traverſing ſo inhoſpitable a tract, little matter of information or amuſement can occur to the traveller. But had he been journeying over a land ſtored with every gift and every beauty of nature, a companion like mine would have deſtroyed his joy and have converted his Eden to a deſert. The nurſe of the crying child was the immediate reverſe of an handſome woman; on this ſcore ſhe was not reſponſible, and had ſhe been moderately clean, I had no right to complain, and might even have derived entertainment from her talk which flowed with a ſtrong current. But truſting wholly to this qualification for a paſſage through life, ſhe ſeemed to deſpiſe every other care. Her hair was a complicated maze of filth, which had never I believe been explored by comb, and from whoſe cloſe vicinity I received a ſevere viſitation; nor was her face while I knew her, once touched by water.

On the firſt of November, at Tazee, five furſungs, in a barren track. The air became now very hot in the day, and cold at night.

On the 2d, at Killaut, a fort on an eminence, ſix furſungs. This quarter of Afghaniſtan has the general aſpect of a deſert; and

and except ſome ſmall portions of arable land contiguous to the places of habitation no other cultivation is ſeen.

On the 23d at Teer Andazee, ſix furſungs. The night air, hitherto cold and bleak, became at this place mild, and the heat of the day oppreſſive.

On the 4th at Potee, a ſmall village, ſituate in a populous and fertile diſtrict. Potee lyes to the right of the Kandahar road, but holding ſome dependance on our Afghan lady, the two camels that carried the family and me, were diſpatched, for her accommodation, to that place, where ſhe was received with much reſpect. Whether the old lady had imagined, that the humble predicament in which I ſtood, would deter me from any attempt to ſully the honor of her family, or that ſhe had noticed in me, a total indifference to all its motions, I know not, but the truth was, ſhe made as little account of me, as if I had been wholly incapacitated from entailing on it any diſgrace. Nor, did I, ſo temperate had my conſtition become, from the predominance of other purſuits, feel the leaſt mortification at the treatment.

On the 5th in an open well cultivated plain, ſix furlungs, where halting for a few hours, the kafilah proceeded two and a half furſungs farther to Kandahar. This city, comprized within an ordinary fortification of about three miles in circumference, and of a ſquare form, is populous and flouriſhing. And lying in

in the great road, which connects India with Perſia and Tartary, has been long a diſtinguiſhed mart.

AT Kandahar, are eſtabliſhed many Hindoo families, chiefly of Moultan and the Rajepoot diſtricts, who by their induſtry and mercantile knowledge, have eſſentially augmented its trade and wealth. The Turcoman merchants of Bochara and Samarkand, alſo frequent this mart, whence they tranſport into their own country a conſiderable quantity of indigo, with which commodity Kandahar is annually ſupplied from various parts of upper India. This city is more abundantly ſupplied with proviſions and at a cheaper rate, than any place I have ſeen on the weſt ſide of the Indus. The grapes and melons of numerous kinds are peculiarly high flavoured, and are comparable with the firſt fruits of Europe. The extenſive range of ſhops occupied by Hindoo traders, with the eaſe and contentment expreſſed in their deportment, affords a fair teſtimony of their enjoying at Kandahar, liberty and protection.

A SON of Timur Shah governs the city with a tract of dependant territory, which produces it is ſaid, a revenue of eighteen lacks of rupees; and it may be juſtly concluded from the appearance of all claſſes of people, that this collection is made without any extraordinary rigour. The environs of Kandahar occupy an extenſive plain, covered with fruit gardens and cultivation, which are interſected with numerous ſtreams, of ſo excellent a quality as to become proverbial; and the climate is happily

happily tempered, between the heats of India and the cold of Ghizni.

It is generally ſuppoſed in Europe that Kandahar ſtands in a country of mountains, and we ſpeak of the lofty paſſes of Kandahar, as a point not leſs clearly aſcertained than the exiſtence of the Alps. Permit me to rectify this popular error, which, like many of a ſimilar texture, has made mountains of mole-hills, and acquaint you that the face of the country ſurrounding the new city of Kandahar, forms an extenſive plain, which as it approaches the ſite of the old fortreſs, becomes interſperſed with hills; but they are of a moderate height; nor, do they form any barrier of difficult acceſs or deep extent.

On leaving Kabul, Bagdaſir, my Georgian hoſt, had given me introductory letters to two Turkiſh reſidents of Kandahar; the one kept a ſmall ſhop in the bazar, the other, Aga Ahmed, had a warehouſe of ſome note in the karavanſera. This perſon received me in a courteous manner, and though [illegible] character of a Chriſtian, I did not experience any of [illegible] of manner, with which Mahometans uſually [illegible] faith. He even directed his countryman the [illegible] to provide the neceſſaries for my journey, and to carefully guard againſt any fraud.

The immediate departure of a kafilah, and the [illegible] approach of winter, when the road to Perſia is impaſſable, determined me to proceed to Herat; though I wiſhed much for a few days reſidence

ſidence at Kandahar. Aga Ahmed made an agreement with the kafilah baſhi* for my paſſage, and alſo that I ſhould be furniſhed with an attendant: this benevolent Turk did not formally recommend me to the director's care, but enjoined him on the forfeiture of his favor to ſhew me a particular kindneſs, which was only to be teſtified by producing my written aſſurance. Could I have found a fit aſſociate to divide the cares of houſekeeping, I would have remained at Kandahar, during the winter, as I ſtill felt the effects of the late ſickneſs, and feared a relapſe from the fatigue of travelling; but the predicament in which I ſtood, wholly precluded any domeſtic connection with the Mahometans; and that of ſome ſtray Armenians, whom I found there, did not ſeem eligible.

The road from Ghizni to Kandahar, according to my groſs obſervations, tends to the ſouth-weſt; and the country has generally a barren aſpect, with a ſcanty ſupply of wood and water. The buildings from a ſcarcity of timber, are conſtructed as in the Kabul diſtricts, of ſun-burnt bricks, and covered with a flat arched roof of the like materials.

On the 8th of November left Kandahar, and proceeded to Koby, three furſungs, a ſmall village ſurrounded by a fertile plain. At the diſtance of two or three miles to the northward

* Baſh in the Turkiſh language ſignifies head, and is often applied in Perſia to the head of a ſociety or party.

of Kandahar, is ſeen on the left the remains of the old fortreſs, ſtanding on the ſummit of a rocky hill of a moderate height, but abrupt elevation. The road at this place tends over a ſtony aſcent of eaſy acceſs, ſkirted on each ſide with ſcattered hills and wide intervals of level land. It is the form of this part of Afghaniſtan, which has given riſe, I apprehend, to the European belief of the mountains and paſſes of Kandahar.

On the 9th, at Auſkuckana, three furſungs, a ſmall village on a thinly cultivated plain. Our ſlow progreſs was occaſioned by the kafilah baſhi remaining at the city to adjuſt ſome buſineſs; he had however wholly neglected mine, for not a perſon when my ſect was known, would even touch my garment.

My ill fortune on the ſcore of an aſſociate, which ſeemed to purſue me with an inveterate rigor, had now given me in the place of the ſcolding nurſe and crying child, a theological and very clamorous diſputant. This bewildered man, unhappily for himſelf and for his neighbours, had conned over ſome of thoſe books of ingenious devices and quaint ſyllogiſms, which are held in high note among the modern Mahometans, and have fixed among them a falſe diſtorted taſte. Even Hafis's poems, ſo conſpicuouſly replete with wit, and with incitements to mere mortal pleaſures, are tortured by them into praiſes of Mahomet and his religion. This fanatical logician was unknown to the other paſſengers, but he loſt no time in diſplaying to them his ſtore

ſtore of endowments, and ſeeing me a favorable ſubject he directed his full force at my head.

I HAD engaged the ſervices of a travelling Arab taylor, and was anticipating the various conveniencies which they promiſed, when he was driven from the proſpect of an eaſy livelyhood by the threats of the logician, who denounced Mahomet's vengeance againſt him if he eat the bread of an infidel. The poor man, hungry, and almoſt naked, ſtarted at the danger, and fearful of incurring ſo powerful a wrath, reſigned his new office, and went to live as it might pleaſe god. Thus had I the dreary proſpect of being peſtered for the term of twenty days by this outrageous Mahometan, who ſo far from being conſcious of any miſchief, believed that he was performing an act of extenſive merit.

ON the evening of the 10th, the kafilah moved, and arrived the next morning at Howrah Muddit Khan,* ſix furſungs, the country open, and the ſoil, a mixture of light ſand and earth, producing generally that ſpecies of weed which has been noted in the remarks of the road from Kabul to Kandahar.

ON the 13th, at Khackchamparah, ſix furſungs. No marks of habitation were ſeen during the journey of theſe two laſt days.

ON the 14th, at Greiſhk, ſeven furſungs, a larged walled village, on the ſkirts of which runs a ſmall ſtream of good water;

* Howrah ſignifies an artificial fountain or reſervoir of water; one of which had been conſtructed at this place by Muddit Khan, for the accommodation of travellers.

halted two days at this place, where a toll is collected on merchandize and paſſengers, and where a ſtock of proviſions was laid in to ſupply our conſumption, through a tract of deſert country extending from this ſtation to the weſtward. My perſecuting neighbour, had already deprived me of two ſervants, when after much intreaty, mixed with a warm eulogium on his extenſive capacity, I prevailed on him to moderate his reſentment againſt me, and ceaſe to anathematiſe thoſe, who might in future be induced from their neceſſity to eat the bread of an infidel. He had by his rhetoric, precluded me even from the uſe of a barber; one of whom being obſerved by him at the cloſe of an operation on my head, was reprobated for his impurity in virulent language, and compelled to cleanſe his razor by an ordeal proceſs, the expence of which was defrayed by Chriſtian-money. On paying the charge, I obſerved to our logician, whom I now treated with little ceremony, that he ſhould alſo cauſe the ſhaver to purge the money by the like trial, that he might not be polluted by the touch; a precaution I added, that would doubtleſs have been adopted, but for a fear of half the amount being loſt in the large alloy that debaſes all Mahometan coins. I was, he ſaid, an incorrigible Kaufir, whom ill fortune had placed with him on the ſame camel, and which he feared could never thrive under ſuch a weight of ſin.

The urgent calls of hunger now gave me a third ſervant, who was in his way from Moultan, to make the pilgrimage of Muſchid.*

chid.* Think how ardent muſt have been the zeal which incited this pilgrim to ſo diſtant a journey, and ſupported him againſt the inclemency of winter, and the inhoſpitality of a rude people, with ſcarcely a covering to his back, no ſhoes to his feet, or an atom of money in his purſe. Though I gave him ſome warm clothing and ſubſtantial food, he was not able to keep pace with our party.

His ſucceſſor was a Kaſhmirian, who had a countenance as demure as that of Gil Blas's Ambroſe Lamela, and to the extent of his ability, as great a rogue. To enhance the value of his ſervices, for which I was obliged to pay largely, he expatiated on the ſin he was about to commit, eating the ſalt of an infidel; but I ſoon found there was no reſtriction to his diet. Moſt of the Aſiatic nations have affixed to ſalt a certain ſacred property, but it is held in the higheſt degree of reverence by the Mahometans, who ſpeak of ſalt as Europeans do of bread. A ſervant is ſaid to eat the ſalt of his maſter, and when guilty of ingratitude, he is ſtigmatized with the name of a Nimmock Haram, or a polluter of his ſalt, which is, I believe, the only term applied by Mahometan nations to ſuch an offender.

Here I am induced to notice the ominous qualities vulgarly aſcribed on ſome occaſions to ſalt in our own country; as when it is accidentally ſpilled, ſome part is thrown over the left ſhoulder,

* It is at this day the reputed capital of Khoraſan.

that

that the ſuppoſed enſuing evil may be averted; a ceremony I have ſeen even obſerved by thoſe who were far removed from the lower claſſes of life. But early impreſſions are not eaſily effaced, and they often impart to the ideas a laſting colour; eſpecially amongſt thoſe who are ſecluded from the more hackneyed paths of the world.

On the 17th, at Shah Nadir, a ſtation in the deſart, ſeven furſungs. This reſervoir built by Nadir Shah, is a ſquare of about twenty feet, over which is erected on pillars a terrace, which extending beyond the margin of the water, affords a convenient lodging to travellers.

On the 18th at Shorab* five furſungs; ſome ſpots of cultivation were ſcattered around this ſtation, but no village in ſight.

On the 19th at Lungherah, a place of halt, in a deſert country, where we found only one weak ſpring of water, which was quickly conſumed.

On the 20th at Dilaram, ſix furſungs, a fort in ruins which is ſkirted by a rivulet, on whoſe margin are ſeen ſome ſcattering trees; a rare ſight in this land! but, the adjacent country is barren and uninhabited.

On the 21ſt, at Buckwau, ſeven furſungs, a ſtation in the deſert.

On the 22d, at Drauze in the deſert, ſix furſungs.—This day

* Signifying ſalt or brackiſh water, but at this ſtation the water was freſh.

the

the ſun ſhot forth its rays which great force, and the ground which we occupied being a bare ſand, reflected an intenſe heat. Whilſt I was panting under a very flimſy covering, I obſerved that my neighbour, a Turkoman Seid, who had no ſhelter, was ſtruck by the ſun, and lay ſtruggling in a violent agony.

THE Mahometans thought him poſſeſſed with the devil, and inſtead of affording any proper aid, began an extraordinary converſation with the ſuppoſed fiend; eſpecially my learned aſſociate who in a peremptory manner, ordered the devil to depart out of the body of a true believer, and a branch of the holy ſtock; but, ſeeing that the command had no effect, though conveyed in Arabic and a vehement tone of voice, I requeſted to interfere; and lifting the incumbent from the ground, threw ſome water on his face, and forcibly poured a quantity down his throat. The Seid ſoon felt the natural benefit of this adminiſtration; but the violence of the ſhock created a temporary ſtupefaction, during which he uttered ſo incoherent a language that it confirmed the opinion that a demon was ſpeaking, and not the Tartar.

OUR Logician addreſſed the infernal perſonage in a very ſpirited harangue, ſeverely reprehending his entrance into the body of one of the prophet's deſcendants, and challenging him, that the cloven foot might conſpicuouſly appear, to repeat the Mahometan creed. To this teſt the ſhattered ſtate of the Seid's ſenſes were not yet equal; nor, was it until he had ſmoaked his pipe,

pipe, that he diſtinctly and with ſurrounding applauſe, pronounced his creed and ſhook off all diabolical connection.

On the 23d, at Ghurmow in the deſart, five furſungs. This evening my perſecuting companion left our party and proceeded with ſome Hindoo Traders to Fera, an Afghan town of ſome note, lying about forty or fifty miles to the ſouth-weſt of Drauze. But, my joy at this riddance, like moſt joys of ſublunary texture, was of ſhort duration; for the vacant place fell to the lot of a much more obnoxious aſſociate.

I begin now to be aſhamed at having impoſed upon you ſo large a portion of private ſtory; yet, without it, I perceive my ſubject would be as barren as the land I travel over; which exhibits to the fatigued eye, one vaſt ſteril plain, without rivers, wood, or ſcarcely a place of human habitation. Though perſonal recitals are uſually ſuſpected of vanity, and even in their beſt ſenſe partake more of the amazing than the inſtructive qualities, you may perhaps gather from my anecdotes, ſome ſubſidiary knowledge of the human character, an important ſubject, and not leſs various than the human face. My next aſſociate was the Arab taylor, already mentioned, who ſucceeded to the vacant pannier by the aſſiſtance of one of his countrymen in our party, a trader of ſome note. A converſation held when I was thought aſleep, ſome nights before, between the logician and the taylor; in which the latter was ſtrenuouſly exhorted to rob me, boded no good from the change; and this counſel was ſtrengthened by

by a doctrine, very prevalent among the lower classes of Mahometans, that it is meritorious and laudable to attack the property of an infidel. Nor was the advice lost on the taylor, who promised an active diligence in performing the required service. Combining therefore the interest of the world with that of his religion, he commenced a brisk attack on my chattels; but, which at that time my vigilance preserved." His subsequent attempts however were more successful, as were seen in the diminution of my apparel. This freebooting system of the taylor's kept me in constant alarm, and displayed every day in stronger colours, the ill consequences of my Christian garb.

On the 24th, at Ghiraunee, six fursungs. A populous walled village, situate near a small running water. Halted there the next day to make the payment of a toll, and purchase provisions for a three days journey over a desert, which reaches from this place to the confines of Khorasan. My Kashmirian servant was wholly divested of religious fervor or a religious cloak. For he neither prayed nor washed; but, was much addicted to theft; and while the taylor purloined my cloths, he was occupied in stealing my victuals. Yet this propensity was, in some degree, compensated by his services, which found active employment in bringing water and fuel, baking cakes, and boiling my coffee.

On the 27th, at Khoos, in the desart, five fursungs. The taylor's payments for conveyance not being regularly made, the seat was again put up to sale, when it was purchased by an Hin-

doſtany Mahometan, who had left his wife and family at Juanpour, in the diſtrict of Benares, and was thus far advanced on a pilgrimage to Muſchid. From the mouth of this devotee, who had formerly been a marauding ſoldier, there iſſued an almoſt inceſſant ejaculation of prayer. In truth it may be ſaid, that he overflowed in holy zeal, for he prayed and cryed in a ſucceſſive rotation; what an extraordinary character would this be thought in a country where its inhabitants, though ſhunning no peril or fatigue in the purſuit of wealth and pleaſure, will ſcarcely croſs a ſtreet to look into a Church. The various precepts of education and religion, eſtabliſhed in the world, but, eſpecially, the different orders of government, produce ſo ſtrong a diſſimilarity in the manners of men, that in inveſtigating thoſe of the moſt oppoſite tendency, they would ſeem to ariſe from beings of a diſtinct ſpecies.

On the 28th, at Gimmuch, ſeven furſungs, a ſtation in the deſert.

On the 29th, at Ouckal, a large walled village, ſtanding within the limit of the province of Khoraſan, and inhabited wholly by Perſians. It is proper here to obſerve, that the natives of Perſia proper, particularly the ſoldiery, are often termed at home, as in foreign countries, Kuzzel Bach; a Turkiſh compound, ſignifying, I am informed, red head, and originating from the Perſian cap, being covered at the top with red cloth.

On the 30th, a halt.

On

On the 31ſt, at Sheerbuchſh, a deſert ſtation, ſix furſungs.

On the 1ſt of November, at Zearut Ghah, ſeven furſungs. A ſmall village, on the ſkirts of which are ſeen the remains of ſome tombs or religious edifices.

On the 2nd, at the city of Herat, three furſungs. The road from Kandahar to Gimmuch leads to the weſt or weſt by north; from thence to Herat, it has I apprehend, nearly a northern courſe, yet I cannot account for the ſudden deviation of the track. The country is generally open, and interſperſed with barren rocky hills of a moderate height. The ſoil is light and ſandy, producing naturally little elſe than the aromatic weed before noted.

The city of Herat ſtands on a ſpacious plain, which is interſected with many ſprings of running water, ſome of which are ſupplied with bridges; and the numerous villages ſurrounded with plantations, muſt afford a pleaſant view to the traveller, whoſe eye has been wearied with the deſerts of Afghaniſtan.

The director of the kafilah carried us to the karavanſerah, where paſſengers only are lodged; the other places of this deſcription, being all occupied by reſident traders. In this ſquare of the karavanſera, I perceived an Armenian, whom I informed with little ceremony, leaſt he ſhould hear a leſs favourable ſtory, that I was an European, returning from India into my own country: but, for greater perſonal ſecurity, I had aſſumed the name of an Armenian. And to quiet any ſuſpicion of the truth of my relation, I produced a letter, which the Georgian, Bagdaſir, had writ-

ten in my favour to an Armenian, who lived in a village about forty miles from Herat. My addreſs was cloſed by obſerving, that though not in want of money, I ſtood in great need of his friendly offices, as he muſt be well aware of the various difficulties affecting thoſe of our ſect, eſpecially when alone, among ſo bigotted a people as thoſe of Khoraſan. The Armenian heard the little oration, which all my powers of ſpeech had pointed at him, with a reſolute coolneſs, and perceiving, I ſuppoſe, that my acquaintance would yield no profit, he turned from me and went away, without even expreſſing the common terms of civility. The frequent occaſions which have occurred to me of noticing the Armenian character, ſoon cooled my reſentment, and enabled me to reconcile the warineſs and apathy of this man, with the common principles which govern his ſect.

The preſent race of Armenians, like the Jews, are with little exception occupied in commerce, chiefly in its ſmalleſt branches, and having long loſt with their country the ſpirit of patriotiſm, diveſted alſo of any valuable attainments of knowledge, they exhibit but a faint diſcrimination of character; being generally induſtrious, ſervile and diſhoneſt; they are ſcattered over various parts of Turkey, Perſia and India, where except in the Engliſh colonies, they live on ſufferance, being often on trivial pretences, inſulted, oppreſſed and plundered. To palliate the evils inherent to their ſituation, and create a ſubſtitute for powers, honors, and national importance, they purſue the different

ferent roads of traffick with unremitting ardor, and invariably meaſure their pleaſures by the mere extent of their wealth. Little ſuſceptible of friendſhip, they are rarely induced to afford even among themſelves mutual aſſiſtance, or diſpoſed to promote the enjoyment of ſociety: the Armenians at this day are divided into two general claſſes; the one the moſt numerous, eſtabliſhed in the Turkiſh dominions; the other in Perſia.

THE city of Jolfa, contiguous to Iſpahan, was expreſſly founded for the accommodation of the Armenians, by Shah Abbas, who aware of the benefits that would accrue to his kingdom, from a commercial and temperate people, gave them an ample protection, and many indulgencies. He permitted them it is ſaid to accompany their adventures to foreign countries, and advanced a capital to thoſe not already opulent, but he always kept their families at Jolfa in pledge of good conduct. The Indian Armenians are of the Jolfa colony, and from an actual reſidence in that city, or ſprung from families originally ſettled there, are all converſant in the Perſian language. The vicinity of the Perſian gulf, which has long maintained an important trade with India, naturally allured the Armenians to a region, which at once held out to them the hope of ſpeedy opulence, and the advantages of a temperate government. Nor did they ever think of returning into Perſia; but having amaſſed a ſufficient wealth, purchaſed the releaſe of their families on the payment of large ſums.

FROM

FROM the deſcription given of the Armenian character, which I am not conſcious of having in the leaſt overcharged, you will not be ſurprized at the mode in which I was received by my brother Chriſtian at Herat. But I now determined to ſlide into the Mahometan community, on the firſt fair occaſion; ſeeing that without adding one benefit, I was like to become a martyr to our faith. In all parts of the city which I frequented, I was known only as a Mahometan, except in the karavanſera, where I experienced unceaſing inſult and deriſion; for the Perſians affect a greater ſcruple in communicating with thoſe of a different religion, than any other ſect of Mahometans. I was not even permitted to draw water out of a common well, but ordered to place my veſſel on the ground, which was filled, by a perſon hired for the purpoſe, from a height and not touched. When I have been waiting for this ſupply, the town boys who in their round of diverſion, would occaſionally take our karavanſera in their way, learning that I was an impure perſon, uſed to form a circle round me, and deſired to have the unclean part ſhewn to them, and ſeemed much diſappointed, on being told that I was unclean all over. My journey hitherto, if not productive of other advantage, has corrected my former belief of Mahometan politeneſs and ſuavity of manners, and alſo I truſt, qualified that inſolence of carriage, which I have too frequently evinced to the inhabitants of our eaſtern territories.

COULD one of our Indian grandees in the fullneſs of his power,

power, ſeated in a palankeen, perhaps on an elephant, ſurrounded with thoſe bands of ſtickmen and pikemen, who diſperſe every man and beaſt that dares to croſs his way: Could this perſonage be tranſported on the ſudden to Herat, how ſpeedily would he be diveſted of his plumes, and reduced to his ſimple value. Whenever I quitted the purlieus of my lodging, I became a grave hypocrital Muſſulman, with the enjoyment of all his privileges; and the city containing a various deſcription of people, there was little apprehenſion of a diſcovery. I daily frequented the eating-houſes, where all the talk of the day is circulated, and chiefly fabricated, in conjunction with the barber's ſhop, which in Herat, has a neat appearance. In the centre of it ſtands a ſmall ſtone pillar, on the top of which is placed a cup of water, in readineſs for operation, and the ſides of the ſhop are decorated with looking glaſſes, razors, and beard combs. Home having no pleaſures for me, I was glad to ſeek them abroad; nor did I fail in procuring equal amuſement and information. Neither Afghaniſtan or the northern provinces of Perſia, permit the reſidence of courtezans, or any women that dance or ſing for the public entertainment. The northern Perſians affect to expreſs an abhorrence of the Indian Mahometans, whom they reprobate for a general depravity of manners, and a neglect of religious duties, yet this temperate and demure people are much defamed, if under their myſterious carriage of body, they do not practice in their different vocations, every ſpecies of deceit and knavery.

knavery. In India, it is a well known fact, that the Moguls, a denomination given there to all foreign Mahometans, throw off their northern cloke, and becoming notorious debauchees, laugh to ſcorn the precepts of their doctors.

HERAT is a ſmaller city than Kandahar, but maintains a reſpectable trade; and the market-place occupying a long ſtreet, covered with an arched roof, is filled with ſhops of various wares. Bread, rice, and fleſh meats, with numerous fruits and vegetables, are equally cheap and abundant; and the grand market, held once a week, is ſo crouded with the produce of the neighbouring villages, that a paſſage through it is difficult and fatiguing. Coarſe woollens of a ſtrong texture are manufactured in the adjacent diſtricts, a great part of which made into garments, are exported into various parts of northern Perſia; furtouts of ſheepſkin with the wool in the inſide, are ſeen hanging at almoſt every ſhop, and are uſed by all claſſes of people in the winter ſeaſon. A ſmall quantity of European commodities is brought to this city from the gulf of Perſia, conſiſting of French broad cloths, cutlery, ſmall looking glaſſes, and prints; but their low prices ſhew that the demand is very limited. The police of Herat is judiciouſly regulated, and the adminiſtration of juſtice vigorous. Two men, apparently above the ordinary claſs, having been convicted of theft, were ſuſpended by the heels from a dome, which ſtands in the centre of the market, where they remained near an hour, to the terror of a gazing populace; having witneſſed

neſſed a part of this exhibition, I returned to my lodging with the intereſted belief that my property, which was all in ſpecie, concealed about my perſon, had derived from it an additional ſecurity.

On exchanging ſome gold at this place, I found the rate more favourable than at Kandahar or Kabul; yet ſtill one in ſixteen leſs than the Indian value. Though I was unremittingly cautious in concealing my money, knowing that a diſcovery would bring an hoſt of enemies on my head, one of my travelling acquaintances, ſuddenly opened the door of my apartment at Herat, a very unuſual practice among Aſiatics, and found me examining the ſtate of my finances. At the ſight of the gold ſpread on the floor, he was ſtruck with ſurprize, and expreſſed an eager curioſity to know the occupation, that had procured me ſo much wealth. But either my ſpeedy departure from Herat, or a more than ordinary honeſty in the Perſian, prevented the ill conſequence which I had apprehended from the impromptu viſit.

Khorasan,* the moſt eaſtern the largeſt, as well as the moſt important province of Perſia, participated the various and ſevere revolutions which affected the ſtate of the kingdom, from the diſſolution of the Grecian dynaſty, until the end of the ninth century, when it was involved in the Tartar dominion of the

* Khor in the ancient Perſic, it is ſaid, ſignifies the laſt.—Sir William Jones.

Sammani race; and in the beginning of the ſixteenth century, after having experienced a ſucceſſion of Tartar and Arabian rulers, it was annexed to Perſia by Iſmael, ſirnamed Sofi, from whom the appellation of Sofi has been given in Europe to the Perſian kings.

HERAT had continued the principal city of Khoraſan, until the ſucceſſion of Iſmael, who beſtowed the pre-eminence on Muſchid, from its containing the tomb of Moozau Reza, his ſuppoſed anceſtor, and one of the twelve grand Imaums or prieſts of the Perſians. Since Muſchid became the capital of Khoraſan, it has been enriched by large donations of the Mahometans of the ſect of Ali, generally known by the name of Schiahs. Even Nadir Shah, the leaſt diſpoſed of the Perſian kings to ecclesiaſtical endowments, ornamented a moſque, which had been built over the tomb of Moozau Reza, with a maſſy cabinet of ſilver and a ſpacious lamp of the ſame metal.

THE religion of the koran had exiſted throughout the vaſt Mahometan empire, for the ſpace of nine hundred years without any eſſential change, when it experienced a ſevere blow from the intrepidity of Iſmael and rapid ſucceſs of his arms. In the courſe of the firſt periods of Mahometaniſm, four Arabian doctors, Malek, Ambel, Hanneifa and Shaffee, made commentaries on the original text, which were adopted by ſects, now ſeverally diſtinguiſhed by the names of commentators. But theſe explanations do not appear to have militated with much force againſt the

the firſt ſyſtem, or created any violent feuds among the different ſectaries.

As the grand innovation of the Mahometan religion was effected in Perſia, and chiefly exiſts in that region, I am induced to make a brief chronological review of ſome of its more important epochs, previouſly to this event. It is ſeen that the Tartar Arſaces, having expelled the princes who ſucceeded to the conqueſt of Alexander, eſtabliſhed a dynaſty, which flouriſhed for the ſpace of four hundred and fifty years, and which in the two hundred and twenty ſixth year of the Chriſtian æra was extinguiſhed, in the perſon of Artabanes, by Ardeſhere,* the Artaxerxes of the Greeks, ſaid to to have been deſcended from the ancient race of Perſian kings.

Should it be found, which I am induced to believe, that the Perſians and the Parthians are a diſtinct people, it is not improbable that the nations which ancient hiſtory denominates Parthians, were compoſed of the Tartars of the Arſacian dynaſty, which held a long poſſeſſion of Perſia, and maintained ſuch fierce conflicts with the Roman empire. The dexterity of the archers, which conſtituted the ſtrength of the Parthian cavalry, and an excurſive rapid manner of fighting, which was repreſented as moſt formidable when they appeared to fly from

* The ſucceſſors of this prince were denominated Saſſanides, from Saſſan the father of Ardeſhere.

battle, correſponds cloſely with the military practice of the modern Tartars; in contradiſtinction to the other nations of northern Aſia.

THE Arabians carried their conqueſts and their religion into Perſia, in ſix hundred and fifty one of our æra, from which time it remained ſubject to the khaliphat, until the middle of the eleventh century, when it was overrun and ſubdued by Jogrul Beg, a Turkoman prince of the Seljukian * race. The ſucceſſors of Jogrul, continued to govern certain quarters of Perſia in the year 1187, when the laſt prince of that race was conquered by Amalek Dinar, who in his turn fell under the power of Jakaſh, the Turcoman prince of Kharaſm. But in 1218 of our æra, the Kharaſmian empire, the Arabian khaliphat with the grandeſt portion of the eaſtern world were ſwallowed up in the power of Jenjis Khan, whoſe poſterity held poſſeſſion of Perſia, for the ſpace of one hundred and ſeventy four years, though ultimately rent into ſmall principalities by a ſeries of inteſtine wars. It became after that period, an appendage to the dominion of Timur, and appears to have acknowledged, in ſeparate governments, a general dependance on certain branches of his family, until the year 1499, when Iſmael Sofi, taking up

* So named from Seljuk his grandſire, who occupied a private ſtation in the vicinity of Samarkand, where he held large landed poſſeſſions.

arms

arms againſt the Tartar princes, roſe by a quick ſucceſſion of victory, and aſſumed the undivided throne of Perſia.

It is ſeen in Knolles's very eſtimable hiſtory of the Turks, that Iſmael was the ſon of Hyder, furnamed from the place of his birth, or the reſidence of his youth, Ardebil, and that he was honourably deſcended. Retiring from the occupations of the world, Hyder fixed his abode in the city of Tauris, where he paſſed an auſtere contemplative life, and was held by the inhabitants of that quarter in great veneration. The fame of his character, ſoon procured him the name of a prophet, and cauſed multitudes of people to reſort to him from all parts of Perſia and Armenia. The more to ſeduce the multitude, ever delighted with novelty, he began to inveigh againſt the doctrine of the Mahometans, which enjoins a ſacred remembrance of the three* firſt ſucceſſors of their prophet, and to revive the opinions of a certain preceding derviſh named Guiui, who was known alſo by the deſignation of Sofi. He aſſerted as if inſpired from above, that none ſhould enter the kingdom of heaven, but thoſe of the ſect of Ali, who was the genuine heir and aſſociate of Mahomet, and ordained, that the memory of Abubucker, Omar, and Oſman ſhould be held accurſed. The king of Perſia, whom Knolles calls Aſſymbeius Uſan Caſſanes,†

* Abubucker, Omar, and Oſman.

† It is ſeriouſly regretted that the Greek and Roman writers, as alſo many of the moderns,

to ſtrengthen his government and acquire popularity, invited Hyder to court, and gave him his daughter in marriage, from which ſprung Iſmael. Being now brought forward on a more conſpicuous theatre; Hyder grew into the general eſtimation of the people, which alarming the fears of Jacoob the ſon of Huſſan, who had ſucceeded to the kingdom, he ſecretly put him to death.

Ismael flying from the power of Jacoob, took refuge with the chief of a ſmall territory, on the ſouthern borders of the Caſpian ſea, named Pyrchales.* Some of the friends of Hyder retired at the ſame time into leſſer Armenia, then ſubject to the Turks, where they promulgated their doctrine with ſucceſs. Their diſciples were diſtinguiſhed by a red band tyed over the turban, whence it is ſaid they firſt obtained the appellation of Kuſſel Baſh, which in the Turkiſh language, as has been already noticed, ſignifies red head. Iſmael during

moderns, have not delivered to us the literal names of men and places, which occur in their hiſtory of foreign nations. This want of accuracy, or rather the impropriety of abſurd vanity, has involved the European hiſtories of Aſia, in a maze of obſcurity; thoſe eſpecially which repreſented the ſeries of warfare maintained againſt Perſia by the ſtates of Greece, and ultimately the conqueſt of that empire by Alexander of Macedon. The name given by Knolles to the Perſian king, taken from ſome latin records, is evidently a miſnomer, as no ſuch denomination is now in uſe among the Mahometans, and we know that no change has affected their names, ſince the firſt eſtabliſhment of the khaliphat. His regal title, being a Tartar, might have been Azim Beg, ſignifying a great lord or prince, and his domeſtic appellation, Huſſan Caſſim.

* So expreſſed by Knolles.

his

his retirement advanced, with zeal, the tenets of his father, and being by nature conſpicuouſly eloquent, of a a penetrating genius and auſtere life, of a comely perſon and invincible courage, was by the vulgar, counted more than human. The nobles of the neighbouring country, allured by the endowments of Iſmael, and the ſpecious novelty of his doctrine, reſorted to his place of abode, with offers of ſupport; and, though ſeeming to ſhun them, he was inveſted with authority, honors and wealth. In token of his rare qualifications and a belief in his power of prophecy, Iſmael received the title of Sofi, "which, ſaith Knolles" ſignifyeth among theſe people, a wiſe man, or the interpreter of the Gods."*

The death of Jacoob, which muſt have happened at an early period of his reign, and the tumults that enſued in Perſia, then uſurped by one Elvan Beg, who was alſo engaged in a warfare with his brother, named Morad, encouraged Iſmael to urge his fortune on ſo promiſing a field. Obtaining ſome military aid from Pyrchales, his firſt protector, he penetrated into Armenia, where he recovered the patrimony of his family, and was cordially received by thoſe who had favored his father. Purſuing his ſucceſs he penetrated into Shirvan, he took and ſacked Shah Machee, the capital of the province, by the plunder of which

* This word I apprehend is purely of Greek origin; the Mahometans had at this period, been long converſant in Greek letters.

he

he largely increaſed the numbers and hopes of his army. Elvan Beg had now expelled Morad, and was buſied in puniſhing ſome of the principal citizens of Tauris, the capital of the kingdom, for having taken up arms in favor of his brother, when Iſmael ſuddenly approaching the city, took it without oppoſition. Elvan deprived of other ſupport, formed an alliance with his brother, but in his progreſs to form a junction with the army of Morad, he was vigorouſly attacked by Iſmael, and ſlain in battle; the conqueror marched without delay againſt Morad, who was emcamped at Babylon, and compelled him to fly into the Arabian deſert:* he roſe without a competitor to the throne of Perſia.†

ISMAEL is perhaps the firſt prince, who at once conquered a ſpacious kingdom and the religious prejudices of its people. Nor does it appear that any of thoſe violent commotions were excited, which uſually mark the progreſs of eccleſiaſtical reformation. The ſyſtem of Hyder and Iſmael, was founded on the poſition that Mahomet had given his daughter Fatima to Ali, as a mark of the greateſt affection, and bequeathed to him the ſucceſſion of the khaliphat. But, that in defiance of this ſacred teſtament, Abubucker, one of the aſſociated friends of Mahomet, ſetting aſide the claims of Ali, had aſſumed the powers of government,

* Where he was cut off by domeſtic treachery.

† Iſmael's acceſſion happened about the year 1508.

which

which at his death, were also forcibly held in a consequent administration by Omar and Osman. But, that the injuries of Ali, having ultimately roused the divine interposition, he became the ruler of the Mussulmans.* This doctrine being unanimously received, Ismael ordained, that as the three first khaliphs were usurpers and sacrilegious violators of the last mandate of their prophet, their memory should, at the five stated times of prayer, be reprobated with every expression of contumely, and the severest vengeance of God denounced against them. He also inserted at the conclusion of the Mahometan creed, that Ali is the friend or the beloved of God, and directed that he and his posterity should be distinguished by appellation of imaums, or holy men.† In contradistinction to the Soonis, who in their prayers cross the hands on the lower part of the breast, the Schiahs drop their arms in straight lines; and as the Soonis at

* [illegible], who were also his confidential associates, and by their enthusiastic courage, had been his grand instruments in aggrandizing the khaliphat, the general body of Mahometans, except the Persians, are often termed Char Yarre, or those of the four friends. They are likewise called Soonie, an Arabic word, signifying the followers of the right path.

† The real number consists of eleven persons, to which a twelfth, supposed yet to come, has been added; their names are Ali, Hussin and Husseyn, his sons, Zyne-ul-Abedein, Mahomet Baukur, Jaffier Sadae, Mousa Kazim, Ali Mousa Besa, Mahomet Tuckee, Ali Nughee, Hussin Anscary and Mahomet Mhedy. The titles bestowed usually on Ali are, Ameer-ul-Momenein, Mortiz Ali and Hyder. This last denominations signifying a lion, is particularly given to Ali, when his military exploits are rehearsed. But when the profoundest respect is expressed for his memory, he is entitled Ameer-ul-Momenein, or lord of the faithful.

certain periods of the prayer, preſs their forehead on the ground or a carpet, the ſectaries of Ali lay on the ſpot which the head reaches, a ſmall tile of white clay, impreſſed with characters dedicated to the memory of Ali.

Some claſſes of the Schiahs believe that Ali was an incarnation of the deity, who perceiving they ſay, the miſſion which had been delegated on Mahomet to be incomplete, aſſumed the perſon of this khaliph, for the purpoſe of fixing the Moſlem faith and power on a firmer baſis. The Schiahs have imbibed ſtrong religious prejudices, are more inflamed with the zeal of devotion, and conſequently leſs tolerant to the other ſects than the Soonis. In Perſia, they do not permit a Sooni to eat at their board, and in common language, without provocation or heat of temper, they call him an infidel. But in what light, dear Sir, will you view a numerous and a civilized people, who have produced writings that would exalt the name of the moſt poliſhed nations, yet in their deliberate expreſſion, imprecate God's wrath five times a day on the ſouls and aſhes of three men who never did them an injury, and who in their day, advanced the empire of Mahomet to the pitch of glory and power. Not appeaſed with uttering these reproaches againſt the memory of theſe khaliphs, they pour a torrent of abuſe on every branch of their families, male and female, lower even than the ſeventh generation. I have ſeen their imagination tortured with inventing terms of reproach on theſe men and their poſterity, and commit verbally every act of

their wives, daughters, and the progeny down to the preſent day. The Soonis, though aware of this unvaried ceremony of execrating the memory of men, whom they have been long taught to hold in reverence, and that they themſelves are ſtigmatized as infidels, do not even, when fully empowered, intemperately reſent this perſecuting ſpirit of the Perſians.

In the diviſion of Khoraſan, ſubject to the Afghan empire, the Perſians enjoy a fair portion of civil and religious liberty, and are rarely treated with inſults.

In noticing the more liberal opinions of the Soonis, in the practice of their religion, I am brought to the recollection of an occurrence, which places this fact in a conſpicuous point of view.

An Armenian merchant from Iſpahan, accompanying an adventure of ſome value, came to the karavanſera in Kabul, where I lodged; and though five of his countrymen were on the ſpot, the other reſidents being Jews, Mahometans and Hindoos, not one of them advanced to give him welcome or an offer of aſſiſtance; and to augment his embarraſſment, all the apartments of the ſerauce were occupied. In this predicament ſtood the Armenian, and he muſt have lain in the ſtreet, had not a Turk invited this forlorn Chriſtian into his own apartment; and he fed him alſo at his own board. One of the Armenian tribe, after ſome days, taking ſhame, perhaps from the Mahometan example, or expecting ſome advantage from the cargoe

of his countryman, tendered him a part of his habitation, which the ſtranger at firſt refuſed; nor did he accept the invitation, until ſeriouſly admoniſhed of the crime of forming ſo cloſe a connection with an infidel.

It is now time to revert to my own ſtory, and inform you, that it had been my firſt intention to have proceeded from Herat to Reſhd, the principal town of the Ghilan province, which lies a few miles inland from Inzellee, a Ruſſian factory on the border of the Caſpian ſea. It is a computed journey of ſeventy days, of about twenty miles each, from this city to Reſhd,* but the road which leads through the leſſer Irak,† has a deviating courſe from the direct line.

Being informed by the Armenians of Herat, that Ruſſian veſſels navigate along the coaſt of Mazanderan, to which a ſtraight track lay from hence, though not much frequented from being ſubject to the depredation of the Turcoman[illegible] I was reſolved to purſue this route, at once direct and [illegible] unknown to European travellers.

A kafilah being about to proceed to Turſhiſh, [illegible] lying in the direction of Mazanderan, I made an agreement with the director for a conveyance; but with a [illegible]

* From Herat to the town of Jubbus, a route of fifteen days, thence to Yerd twenty-five, to Caſhan ten, and a fifteen days journey to Reſhd.

† There are two provinces of Irak, the leſſer and greater; the latter, termed Irak Azeem, of which Bagdat is the capital, chiefly depends on Tur[illegible] emirs.

ſtipulation, that I was to be received in a Mahometan character; and the better to guard againſt a diſcovery of my perſon, I took the name of an Arab, a people little known in this part of Perſia, and the knowledge of whoſe language is confined only to ſome of the more learned prieſts.

Some days before my departure from Herat, an Afghan Seid came into my apartment, and perceiving in the courſe of converſation, that I was a Chriſtian, he exclaimed with ſenſible emotions of joy, that he had now obtained a favorable opportunity of revenging the grievous injuries ſuſtained by many of his holy anceſtors at the hands of infidels, and that unleſs I paid a fine of five hundred rupees,* I muſt repeat the creed of Mahomet and be circumciſed. Pretending an ignorance of the purpoſe of this demand, I carried the ſeid, with a miſchievous intention I confeſs, to the next quarter, where the Armenian corps, four in number, were then aſſembled, and requeſted the principal of them, who ſpoke the Perſian language with fluency, to explain the ſubſtance of the ſeid's demand; and this was preciſely the point to which I wanted to reduce the queſtion. When the hungry Afghan perceived, that inſtead of one Chriſtian he had found five, his exultation had no bounds. He ſwore by his beard, that we ſhould all incur the fine or circumciſion. Oh! what a glorious ſight, cried

* Such pecuniary aſſeſſment is termed Jayzeah, and is occaſionally levied in Mahometan countries, on thoſe who do not profeſs the faith of Mahomet.

he,

he, will be diſplayed to our prophet, when theſe hardened infidels, renouncing their hereſy and impurities, ſhall become a portion of the faithful: what a triumph to our holy religion! The expedient which I had adopted, though not a fair, was for me a fortunate one; as the controverſy, which became ſerious, was now more equal. The ſeid called loudly on the Mahometans in the name of the prophet, to aſſiſt in compelling the enemies of his religion either to embrace it, or by adminiſtrating to the wants of his deſcendants, contribute to its ſupport; the Perſian reſidents of the karavanſera endeavoured to aſſuage the Afghan's intemperance; but they quickly withdrew all interpoſition, on being told that the toleration of their doctrine was a greater indulgence, than the maintenance of their execrable tenets deſerved. The ſeid experiencing however more obſtinate reſiſtance from the Chriſtians than he had expected, it was evidently ſeen, that however ardent might have been his zeal for the advancement of religion, he was not the leſs mindful of his temporal welfare; and permitting himſelf, after diſplaying great powers in this holy war, to be ſoothed by the ſuppliant infidels, he withdrew his threats for a trifling ſum of money; far diſproportioned to the firſt demand. And here I muſt obſerve, that when I ſaw the reſolute and judicious manner in which the principal Armenian conducted his ſhare of the conflict, I felt a compunction for having involved him in ſo ſerious an embarraſſment.

At Herat I found, in two karavanſeras, about one hundred Hindoo

Hindoo merchants, chiefly natives of Moultan, who by the maintenance of a brisk commerce, and extending a long chain of credit, have become valuable subjects to the government; but discouraged by the insolent and often oppressive treatment of the Persians, they are rarely induced to bring their women into this country. When the Hindoos cross the Attock, they usually put on the dress of a northern Asiatic; being seldom seen without a long cloth coat and a high cap. Some Jewish traders reside also at Herat, where they are accused of practising all that system of chicane, to which their tribe is so notoriously addicted in the western world. Being habituated to the manners of upper Asia, and conversant in most of its languages, the Jews and Armenians mix with little personal inconveniency in Mahometan societies.

The leading customs of the various nations of Asia are similar, or but weakly diversified. When they sit, the legs are crossed or bent under them; they perform topical ablutions before and after meals, at which no knife or spoon is used, unless the diet be wholly liquid; they invariably adopt the like modes of performing natural evacuations. And all the hair of the body is shaved, except that of the beard; yet this last usage is more peculiar to upper Asia, where likewise all degrees of people cover the head; affixing the idea of indecency to its being bare; and they never enter an apartment covered with a carpet, without pulling off their shoes.

On taking leave of the Armenians, I could not help observing,

ing, perhaps unſeaſonably, that inſtead of contributing to my aſſiſtance, in a land where our ſect already experienced many grievances, they had conſiderably increaſed them, by withholding even the inferior offices of humanity; but that I cordially forgave a treatment which was to be aſcribed to the exceſs of caution conſtitutionally inherent to their tribe. The principal Armenian earneſtly urged me to open myſelf to him, and diſcloſe the myſtery which appeared in my character. It was not in reaſon, he ſaid, to believe that motives of curioſity, as I alledged, could have induced me to incur ſo much fatigue, danger, and expenſe, which were only to be compenſated by the proſpect of gain, or a pilgrimage to Jeruſalem. But the Armenians, ſaid he, are now the only viſitors of the ſacred tomb, and indeed the only pure Chriſtians now exiſting. He was of opinion, in ſhort, that my ſtory was a counterfeit, and concluded by aſſerting that I was a jewel-merchant, or [illegible]. I endeavoured to explain, that among the natives of Europe it was a common uſage to viſit foreign countries; where [illegible] obſervance of the manners and arts of various people, [illegible] the underſtanding, and produced a more extenſive knowledge of mankind; and that a frequent intercourſe with nations of different cuſtoms and religious opinions, taught them to ſhake off domeſtic prejudice, and to behold all men with the eye of common affection. To this language, which he had probably never before heard, he liſtened with an air of vacant wonder [illegible] but

but, as the doctrine did not ſquare with his ſentiments of the world, he ultimately treated it with contempt. Wiſhing me however a better journey, he ſaid, than my plan promiſed.

On the evening of the 22d of November, I left Herat, and halted that night at Alum Guiſour Chuſhmah,* three quarters of a furſung. Here let me again crave your indulgence for the copious ſelf narration already impoſed on you, and for that which I fear is yet to come. But what can I do? northern Perſia is at this day, equally void of events as of letters, and has but few monuments of grandeur. You muſt therefore extend a large portion of patience over theſe communications, and by permitting me to ſpeak of myſelf, the favorite amuſement of all travellers, you will make me a ſufficient recompenſe for all the little chagrins, which I incurred, and ſome ſolitary hours which I paſſed in the courſe of my journey.

The kafilah director, Aga Ali, and his family which conſiſted of his mother, wife and a ſervant, having conſented that I ſhould be received among them, in the character of an Arab, going on a pilgrimage to Muſchid, I joined the party at an appointed place, whither every perſon reſorted, except the females of our family; on whoſe heads, and indeed all parts of them, many an indecent reproach was thrown. There was no mortal ill, which theſe women did not deſerve to feel; but,

* Chuſhmah in the Perſic, ſignifies a natural fountain.

when women were concerned in any undertaking, what good could reſult, exclaimed all the enraged Mahometans. Night approaching, the kafilah moved and left Ali to eſcort the ladies, in which ſervice I was alſo retained. On their arrival he began to utter ſome angry language; but it ſoon became manifeſt that we were members of a female government, which was conducted by the mother of Ali. She ſeemed in her manners, not unlike the Afghan lady, whom I heretofore endeavoured to celebrate, but had leſs fierceneſs and deciſion; the deficiency I preſume, aroſe from the conſtitutional difference between the tempers of an Afghan and a Perſian; for my new dame evinced the ſame thirſt after ſupreme ſway, but exerciſed it with more mildneſs. Ali remaining at the town gate to make ſome toll payments, diſpatched the ladies and me under charge of ſome of his aſſociates, who perceiving our progreſs to be very ſlow and the night far advanced, left us with little ceremony. When Ali arrived, he expreſſed much reſentment at the ſcandalous deſertion of his friends, and many thanks for my attention; though I could hear him murmur at the indecency of Mahometan women being entruſted to the charge of an infidel. But Ali's honor might have remained ſafe, in the moſt intemperate quarter of the world: and for my part, I was ſo grievouſly loaded by a heavy muſquet, which he had given me to carry, that had his ſpouſe been a Venus, I would not have looked at her. No apprehenſion now exiſted of a ſcolding nurſe, a crying child, or a

fanatic

fanatic disputant; or indeed of any thing which could actually offend; for my present associate was a bag of rice, from whose good neighbourhood, I anticipated much satisfaction.

On the evening of the 24th, moved from the Chushmah, and arrived the next morning at Dhey Soorch, four fursungs. Some little cultivation was seen, but the general face of the country bore the same wild inhospitable aspect, as in the eastern quarter of Khoraſan. The benefits attached to my new character, were now conspicuously testified. I was from my supposed sect, entitled Hadji, and much courted by all the passengers, especially when the given purpose of my journey was understood. No person in the description of a Christian, should attempt to make a passage through this part of Persia; should it through a train of favourable events be accomplished, he will be harrassed and defrauded, even on a principle of religion, and ever insulted with impunity. The attempt indeed I think impracticable, and liable to subject the adventurer to imminent danger.

On the 26th, at the Pool, or bridge of Skebo, three and a half fursungs, in an uncultivated country. This bridge built of brick and mortar, stands over a small river whose name I could not learn, running to the southward or left, and is fordable at most seasons.

On the 27th, at Corian, a large village, four and a half fursungs. In this neighbourhood, I saw some windmills, for grinding corn; they are constructed on the same principles as

thoſe of Europe, but inſtead of canvas wings, broad leaved flags are ſubſtituted. The toll gatherer at Corian affects to obſerve a peculiar vigilance in the execution of his office, which he ſaw occaſion to exerciſe on me.

PASSENGERS, proceeding to the weſtward, uſually procure a paſſport at Herat; but being averſe to a mode, which might have led to inconvenient explanations, I did not apply for this document. The officer, though glad of the impoſſion, held out the utter impoſſibility of paſſing without the ſignature of government, and argued with much delicacy on the crime of diſobedience. But feeling ſome of my money in his hand, he obſerved that my caſe admitted a favorable conſtruction; that I was an Arab, and a pilgrim of the holy tomb of Muſchid. He would therefore relax a little, he ſaid, in ſo good a cauſe. To put money in thy purſe, is as neceſſary in Khoraſan as it was in Venice, with the difference that there, the more decorated the garb, the greater reſpect was ſhewn to the perſon, whereas in Aſia, the ſecurity and the comforts of life, often depend on a wary concealment of wealth, and all its appendages.

THE complaints of Aſiatic travellers againſt a camel driver, are not leſs frequent than thoſe of marine paſſengers in our country, againſt the maſter of a ſhip, and oftentimes with the like want of juſt cauſe. Men under reſtraint and deprived of accuſtomed amuſements, become unreaſonable in their deſires

and

and fretful from the natural diſappointment of vain wiſhes. The croſs incidents which their ſituation neceſſarily produces, and which a degree of ſkill might qualify, are often outrageouſly aſcribed to their conductor. This preliminary, though militating againſt myſelf, I thought but honeſt to the exhibition of certain charges againſt Ali the kafilah director. The firſt ſhews, that having bargained with this Mahometan, on the payment of a ſtipulated ſum, for a conveyance to Turſhiſh, he at the firſt halting place laid me under a contribution, on a pretence of the extraordinary weight of my baggage, though he well knew, that the equipment of a mendicant, could not have been more ſlender. This demand was no ſooner adjuſted, than he commenced another attack, not on my purſe, though that was weak, but on my fame, which was vulnerable all over.

Ali ſeeing me generally addreſſed by the title of Hadji, and treated with a marked civility, was much mortified, and began to ſap the importance I had obtained. He whiſpered to ſome of thoſe with whom I aſſociated, that I was no Hadgi, nor even one of the true faith. They expreſſed great ſurprize at this information, but blamed him for the diſcloſure, nor did they ever communicate the ſtory to the other paſſengers, or abate in their former attention.

On the 29th, at Charſoorch, ſeven furſungs, a ſtation in an uninhabited country, and ſupplied with one well, whoſe water was barely ſufficient for the ſupply of our party.

On

On the 30th, at Turſala, three and a half furſungs, a ſtation in the deſert, near a well of brackiſh water.

On the 1ſt of December, at Kauff, ſeven furſungs, a populous and in this country a large village, which maintains a moderate traffick with Herat, Muſchid, and Turſhiſh. Markets and public ſhops being only ſeen in the cities and principal towns of Perſia and Afghaniſtan, travellers are obliged to apply for proviſions to the houſekeepers, who are often unable to provide the required quantity. Though Kauff is a village of note, bread in no part of it is publickly vended, and having occaſion for a three days ſupply, I advanced the required price to a Perſian, who, after keeping me in waiting till midnight abſconded. Bread and the cheeſe of ſheeps milk, when procurable, was my common fare; which, with a water beverage, gave me a vigor and ſtrength equal to the daily fatigue I incurred. And when the inclemency of the weather is conſidered, and how broken his reſt muſt be who is carried on the back of the rougheſt paced animal that moves, thruſt alſo into a crib not half his ſize, and ſtunned by the loud clamours of the drivers, you muſt grant that no ordinary texture of conſtitution is required to accompany the kafilahs in northern Perſia.

Having witneſſed the robuſt activity of the people of this country and Afghaniſtan, I am induced to think, that the human body may ſuſtain the moſt laborious ſervices, without the aid of animal food. The Afghan whoſe ſole aliment is bread,

curdled

curdled milk and water, inhabiting a climate which often produces in one day, extreme heat and cold, shall undergo as much fatigue, and exert as much strength, as the porter of London, who copiously feeds on flesh meat and ale; nor, is he subject to the like acute and obstinate disorders. It is a well known fact, that the Arabs of the shore of the Red Sea, who live with little exception on dates and lemons, carry burthens of such an extraordinary weight, that its specific mention to an European ear, would seem romance.

On the 3d of December, at Ruee, four and a half fursungs, a populous village, where a fall of snow produced a change on the face of the land, to which I had been long a stranger. Halted on the 4th, on account of the inspection of some goods which had been damaged by the weather. Three Persians with myself occupied the lower part of a windmill, which our joint endeavours to defend from the cold, were wholly ineffectual; yet my companions seemed little affected by it. They were horsemen, and having no attendants, were obliged to clean their cattle, and go in search of forage, fuel and provisions; these offices they performed with alacrity, nor did they once shrink from the boisterous drifts of snow and a north wind that, I verily believe, must have swept every mountain-top in Tartary. My body, which a residence of many years in India had greatly relaxed, and a recent sickness enfeebled, was open to every touch of those rude blasts, and I saw with mortification a north Bri-

ton, ſeriening himſelf from a climate, which imparted vigor to an Aſiatic. My aſſociates had been horſemen in the ſervice of Timur Shah, but diſguſted at his ill payments, they had retired, and were returning to their families at Niſhabor.

On the 5th, at Say Dayr, five and a half furſungs, a ſmall fortified village, whoſe adjacent lands extending in a valley, ſeemed to be well cultivated.

On the 6th, at Aſhkara, five furſungs, a ſmall fortified village. A great quantity of ſnow fell on our arrival at this place, and the weather became ſo tempeſtuous, that the kafilah could not proceed. Our party went into the fort to ſeek ſhelter, and after earneſt intreaties, were conducted into a ſmall dark room, barely capable of defending us againſt the ſtorm, which had now ſet in with violence. The inhabitants aware of our diſtreſs, furniſhed an abundant ſupply of fuel, which became as neceſſary to our exiſtence as food; but when the cold was a little qualified, we experienced an urgent want of proviſions; not an article of which was to be procured at Aſhkara. This dilemma diſmayed the ſtouteſt of us, and became the more alarming from the apparently fixed ſtate of the weather. Yet, ſuch cordial pleaſures are inherent in ſociety, that though pent up in a dark hovel, which afforded but a ſlimſy ſhelter againſt the mounds of ſnow furiouſly hurled againſt it, our good humour with each other, and an ample ſupply of firing, produced cheerfulneſs and content.

One

One of our aſſociates who had received a more than ordinary education, and had a taſte for poetical literature, amuſed us with reading Jamis's ſtory of Joſeph and Zuleicha,* which for its ſcenes of wondrous pathetic adventure, and the luxuriant genius of the poet, is happily adapted to ſoften the rigors of a winter's day. Nor was our companion deficient in accompanying the reading with that energetic emphaſis and deep naſal tone, which in the eaſt is thought highly ornamental to the recitation of poetry.

As our pleaſures and our ſorrows exiſt largely in the imagination, and as at this period, my ideas did not wander beyond the circle of my reſidence, I felt comforts in my preſent ſituation, equal perhaps to the enjoyments of the moſt refined ſocieties. How often in the fervor of my heart, have I prayed for the fortitude which is ſaid to have actuated the ſtoic ſchool, that I might ſhackle, or at leaſt qualify the paſſions that are continually precipitating us into dependance and embarraſſments, and eſtabliſh within myſelf a reſource for conducting all the operations of life. But the wiſh was futile, nor would the gratification of it accord with the œconomy of human nature.

The inhabitants of Aſhkara were now buſily employed in commemorating the death of Huſſeyn, the ſecond ſon of Ali, who was ſlain at Karibullah, in the vicinity of Bagdat, where a mona-

* The Patriarch of Ægypt. Zuleicha is the name given by the Arabians to the wife of Potiphar.

ment has been erected to his memory, and whither the Schiahs numerously resort, in the first ten days of the Mahometan month Mohurrum,* to offer up their prayers. Hussin, the elder brother, was poisoned by some female machinations; but the celebration of this event, which is noticed at a different period of the year, does not produce that tumultuous lamentation, and often dangerous effects which accompany the memory of Hussyn's fate.

A PILGRIMAGE to the tomb of Hussyn confers the title of Karribullahee; which classes next after the Hadji, and before a Muschidee, an appellation given to those who visit the shrine of Muschid. The pilgrims of Karibullah make grievous complaints of the insults and oppression of the Turks. Yet it would seem that persecution inflames and invigorates their sense of this religious duty, so that it is merely rated by the extent of difficulty and danger it occurs; for I have known a Schiah travel from the banks of the Ganges, to prostrate himself at Hussyn's tomb, amidst the scoffs and rigor of the Turks. To prevent the Afghans from throwing a ridicule on their observance of the Mohurrum ceremony, which happened during our halt at Ashkara, the Persians shut the gate of the fort, and commemorated the day by beating their breasts, and chanting in a mournful tone, the praises of Hussyn.

* The Mahometan months being Lunar, the fasts observed in Ramzan and Mohurrum are moveable.

In India, though the proportion of the ſect of Ali is ſmall, and Huſſeyn only known but by his name, this occaſion never fails to excite extravagant tokens of grief and enthuſiaſm, and it often happened, that the maſquerade mourners, impelled by a violent agitation of their minds and bodies, and heated alſo by intoxication, commit deſperate outrages. But the fact is, that all the natives of India, Hindoos, and Mahometans, are wondrouſly attracted by public exhibitions, and thoſe of the moſt glaring kind. Though any external commemoration of Huſſeyn's death is repugnant to the doctrine of the Soonis, thoſe of India cannot reſiſt ſo alluring an offer of gratifying their love of ſhew and noiſe. Many of the Hindoos alſo, in compliance with this propenſity, and the uſage of their Mahometan maſters, contribute largely to augment the Mohurrum proceſſions. I have heard Mr. Schwartz, the Chriſtian miſſionary on the coaſt of Coromandel, as pious a prieſt as ever preached the goſpel, and as good a man as ever adorned ſociety, complain that many of his Indian proſelytes, diſguſted at his church's want of glitter and buſtle, take an early opportunity of going over to the Popiſh communion, where they are congenially gratified by the painted ſcenery, by relics, charms, and the blaze of fire-works. From Schiahs and Soonis, Proteſtants and Roman Catholics, I am forcibly brought to the buſineſs of the day. It is the roguery of a camel-driver, on whom, ſhould you ever travel in Perſia, never put your faith. All now gravely informed me, that he meant to proceed on the next day towards

Niſhabor, but that he would provide a conveyance for me to Turſhiſh on an aſs. It was in vain to talk of engagements, the injuſtice of forfeiting them, or the ſum I had advanced; and had not one of my aſſociates pleaded my cauſe with a ſpirit that intimidated him, Ali would have laughed at my plea.

On the 10th, the ſtorm having abated, the kafilah moved before day-break, and arrived in the evening at Hoondeabad, ſix and a half furſungs, a ſmall village, ſituate in a well cultivated plain, watered by many rivulets. Ali, with an ill grace, procured for me one ſide of a camel, the other being poiſed by a bag of rice, conſigned to the market of Turſhiſh; my companions, who had continued to treat me with much kindneſs, proceeded from this ſtation to Niſhabor, which lies about ſeventy miles to the north-weſt of Hoondeabad.

The diviſion of Khoraſan, which has been annexed to the Afghan empire, ſeems to be wholly entruſted to the management of Perſians, who though a conquered people, live in the enjoyment of every right, civil or religious, which could have been granted to them under their own princes. We met a party this day, returning from the army which Timur Shah had ſent to beſiege Muſchid. This city, on which depends a ſmall tract of territory, is governed by Shah Rock, a grandſon of Nadir Shah, and I believe, the only branch of that prince's family now in exiſtence.

Shah Rock is the offspring of Mirza Kuli, the eldeſt ſon of Nadir Shah, by a daughter of the Sultan Huſſeyn, who was driven from

from the throne of Perſia by Mahmoud the Afghan. After Nadir's death,* the empire fell to the poſſeſſion of Ali, his nephew, who cut off all the deſcendants of Nadir, except Shah Rock then a youth, whom he intended to raiſe nominally to the throne, ſhould the Perſians ſhew any ſtrenuous oppoſition to his government. But being in a ſhort time after his acceſſion, encountered by his brother, who by liberal donations had collected a ſtrong force, Ali was defeated and taken priſoner in the field. Ibrahim, though at the head of a numerous army, and poſſeſſing the ſouthern provinces of the empire, ſaw the impractibility of attaining the dominion of Perſia, whilſt Shah Rock, who was much beloved in Khoraſan, held the city of Muſchid, where a large portion of the treaſures of Nadir were depoſited.

That he might the better ſucceed in his deſign of ſeizing the perſon of Shah Rock, his only rival, he declared this prince, by a lineal deſcent from Nadir and the race of Sofi, to be the rightfull heir of the kingdom, and by public deputation invited him to Iſpahan, that he might there be inveſted with the diadem of his anceſtors. The adherents of Shah Rock, averſe from entruſting him to ſo powerful and ſuſpicious a charge, made an advantageous uſe of Ibrahim's profeſſions, by inſtalling with the neceſſary ceremonials, the young prince at Muſchid. Ibrahim,

* Nadir Shah was aſſaſſinated at the age of ſixty years, near Muſchid, in the month of June, 1747.

baffled

baffled in the deſign of drawing Shah Rock to Iſpahan, cauſed himſelf to be proclaimed king, and proceeded to reduce the chiefs of Khoraſan. But ſquandering his treaſures by an indiſcriminate profuſion, and having diſguſted his troops by an injudicious choice of officers, he was betrayed by them, and together with Ali, then his priſoner, delivered to the miniſters of Shah Rock, who put the brothers to death.

About this period appeared, it is ſaid, a deſcendant of the ancient Soſi family, who had eſcaped the maſſacre of the times, and improving to his purpoſes the diſtraction of the kingdom and the minority of a young prince, he ſuborned, by a largeſs, and extenſive promiſes, a party in the court of Muſchid, and having procured at a ſecret hour admittance into the palace of Muſchid, he ſeized the perſon of Shah Rock and deprived him of ſight. The act was ſoon puniſhed by the death of the perpetrator; but Shah Rock, cut off by this calamity from the hope of empire, was contented to remain at Muſchid, in the poſſeſſion of a very limitted revenue.

He has two ſons, Nadir Mirza, and Wulli Neamut, who are waging againſt each other an inveterate predatory war. Wulli Neamut being driven from the city, has collected a body of cavalry, which in Khoraſan are ever ready to rove in queſt of plunder, and are at this time levying a general contribution on every village, karavan, and traveller, within his power or reach; not ſparing even the pilgrims. After an ineffectual effort to

enter

enter the city, he ſolicited the aſſiſtance of Timur Shah, who ſent a ſmall army to join him and beſiege Muſchid. But their knowledge of artillery is ſo limited, that the Afghans after the campaign of a year, have only been enabled to ſtreighten the ſupplies of the beſieged.

When the extenſive conqueſts of the Afghans in Perſia are conſidered, the ſpacious empire which they have ſo recently founded, and their general reputation for military proweſs, I felt a ſenſible diſappointment at ſeeing their armies, compoſed of a tumultuous body, without order or common diſcipline. It is ſeen, however, that they were good ſoldiers under Ahmed Shah, who himſelf, a prince of conſpicuous military talent and a diſcerning patron of merit, was empowered to give his troops that force which they conſtitutionally poſſeſs. Yet even under this famed leader, the Afghans, impetuous, and haughty from the form of their government, were never an obedient ſoldiery; and the ſevere encounters which Ahmed Shah experienced from the Sicques, when he ultimately evacuated the Punjab, are attributed to the deſertion of his troops, who already enriched by the plunder of India, retired in large bodies to their own country.

Though far ſhort of the opinion I had formed of it, the Afghan army is much ſuperior to that of Perſia at the preſent day, who long deprived of a monarch, and ſubjected either to a foreign yoke or the precarious authority of petty chieftains, have loſt with their patriotiſm the ſpirit of enterprize. It appears that the Perſians

ſians have been ever ill acqu[illegible] that their grand ſucceſſes were [illegible] their cavalry. Little other [illegible] of ſkill, than a review of Nadir's long ſiege of Bagdad, which, though a fortification of mean tenability, baffled all his efforts.

The matchlock-piece is the common weapon of a Perſian foot ſoldier, except in the province of Auderbeijan, and in ſome parts of Shirvan and Dhaghiſtan, where the uſe of the ſpring lock muſquet has been adopted from the Turks; but the ridicule which has been thrown on this practiſe by the body of the people, will probably long prevent its general introduction. The ſeverity of the winter ſeaſon, has now obliged the Afghan army to retire into quarters, and afforded a temporary relief to the inhabitants of Muſchid, who began to feel a want of proviſions.

The young chief of this city, in defiance of the repreſentations of his clergy, has coined into current ſpecie ſuch of thoſe ornaments with which the oſtentatious zeal of the Schiahs had for two centuries been decorating the tomb of Mooza Beza, as had been preſerved from former depredations. Even Nadir, the avowed foe of prieſthood, made his offering at the ſhrine of Muſchid. But his deſcendant fearing that the whole fabric would fall into the unhallowed hands of his enemies, has wiſely ſacrificed a part, to prevent a total deſtruction. Yet his efforts will probably be fruitleſs; for if the Afghans return to the ſiege, they will derive a conſiderable aid from the low ſtate of the Muſchid treaſury, which I

am

am informed is nearly conſumed. While the prieſts inveigh with ſufficient acrimony againſt the ſacrilegious ſeizure of Nadir Mirza, there is no limit to their invectives againſt his brother, on whom they deprecate the ſevereſt divine vengeange, for calling in the inveterate foes of their religion, to the deſtruction of the only ſacred city left in the poſſeſſion of the ſect of Ali.

On the 11th, at Fidgeroot, a ſmall fort, three and a half furſungs, ſituate in a cultivated and generally a plain country, in whoſe vicinity are ſeen many fortified villages.

On the 12th, at Dochabad, four and a half furſungs, a populous open village, protected by an adjoining fort, and diſtinguiſhed by a manufacture of raw ſilk. The diſtricts of Dochabad form the the weſtern boundary of the dominion of Timur Shah, which in a direction from Kaſhmire to this place,* occupy by a groſs computation, a ſpace of ——— Britiſh miles. Were this ſpacious extent of territory, governed by as vigorous and enterprizing a prince, as it is peopled by a brave and hardy race of men, the entire conqueſt of Perſia would not be of difficult attainment. But Timur Shah inherits no portion of his father's genius, and his power is ſeldom ſeen or felt, except ſome object of wealth, and of ſafe accompliſhment be held out to his avarice. The exiſtence of the emperor is

* It is to be noted, that ſome petty chiefſhips lying between Kaſhmire and the Indus, are held by independant Afghans.

then felt, and for the day [illegible] Here I am checked by a fear that these opinions may be thought presumptuous and dogmatical, and that from [illegible] opportunities of acquiring information, I have decided with an unwarrantable preremptoriness on the character of a prince, in whose country I have been but a mere sojourner. I have only to urge, that the language which I have held, is prevalent in the country, and its truth strongly marked in all the operations of government, which come before the public eye.

On the 13th, at Koot, six fursungs, a village dependent on the chief of Turshish. From the vicinity of Dochabad, a waste extends to this place, on which is neither an inhabitant, or the least token of vegetation; and it should seem that nature had interposed this barren sand to preclude the assaults of war, and even discourage a disposition to social intercourse. To the north, extends a lofty chain of mountains covered with snow,* and the other quarters shew a tract of sand, thinly marked with craggy hills.

The proprietor of the camel on which I rode, had carried me to Koot, his place of residence, fearing to carry his wares, principally composed of rice, to the town of Turshish, least the chief should take it at an arbitrary price. He told me, that

* A road leads over these mountains to Muschid, which is said to be one hundred miles north-west from Turshish, and about thirty miles to the northward of Nishabor.

his

his cattle were not deſtined for that place, whither I might purſue my way in the beſt manner I liked, except on his camel. The fort of Turſhiſh being at no greater diſtance than two miles, I would have proceeded without heſitation, could I have carried my baggage, which though of little value, was too heavy a load for me. After much intreaty, it was tranſported at my charge, on the back of an aſs,* to the karavanſera at Turſhiſh; there I found every apartment occupied, but the application of a ſmall piece of money to the gate-keeper, who regulates the diſtribution of quarters, introduced me to a lodging, occupied by only one perſon. The ſtranger accoſted me with evident tokens of joy, obſerving, that the ſolitary life he had paſſed at Turſhiſh, was very tireſome to him, and that he expected a cordial relief from my company. This reception was happily adapted to my purpoſe, and promiſed my Mahometan character a fair introduction. It was agreed that a joint board ſhould be kept, that my aſſociate, yet weak from a late ſickneſs, ſhould prepare the victuals, and that I ſhould furniſh the water, and a laborious duty it was, there being no good water at a nearer diſtance than a mile.

HERE I muſt inform you, that this was by no means a degrading duty, and is performed by travellers of a rank much

* The Perſian aſſes are of a ſtrong make, and much uſed by dealers in ſmall and ordinary wares. I have ſeen the conveyance of large parties, conſiſting of thoſe animals, which appear to be more active and endure more fatigue than thoſe of England.

ſuperior to that I h[illegible], and alſo that few travellers in this country of whatever con[illegible]tion exhibit any appearance of wealth, fearing the oppreſſions [illegible] government, and the heavy exactions of the toll gathere[illegible]. Even men of opulence do not carry a ſervant.

PREVIOUSLY to the commencement of a journey, ſocieties are formed at the place of rendezvous, where the different offices are alloted to each; the moſt robuſt generally provide the water; ſome are employed in the kitchen, while others go in queſt of proviſions and provender for the cattle. Should no prior opportunity have offered to fix ſuch a ſcheme, it is adjuſted on the firſt halting day, and preſerved on a cordial footing throughout the journey. It is not to be inferred that certain attentions are not alſo ſhewn to the men of rank, who attach themſelves to theſe parties. When known, and they are ſoon diſtinguiſhed, they become by common conſent exempt from the more laborious occupations, and all aged perſons are invariably treated with a reſpectful indulgence. My preſent companion, whoſe name I never knew or aſked, was overcaſt with a fixed melancholy reſerve; nor, could I extract from him other information, than that he had laſt come from Aſterabad. But he ſtudiouſly avoided giving me any intelligence of the affairs of that province, eſpecially of the Ruſſian trade there which I much deſired to know, and of which he muſt have been informed; and though he ſeemed to like my company or perhaps my aſſiſtance, he ſoon became to me an unplea-

unpleaſant colleague. In a few days, his departure to Herat left me ſole tenant of a dark ſolitary lodging, with the advantage, and with the privilege of being unreſervedly admitted into the ſociety of the karavanſera, as a pure Mahometan.

In the courſe of vacancies, I got poſſeſſion of a more commodious apartment, in the corner of which I found at firſt entrance, a decent looking old man ſmoking his pipe. On enquiry it appeared, that he was then wholly at large; but that his uſual ſubſiſtance aroſe from vending certain ſpells, which were powerfully efficacious in conferring every ſpecies of worldly happineſs, and conſequently in the preclufion of all evil. Yet he was willing to ſhut up his book, he ſaid, ſhould any other proſpect of maintainance he held out. This being the perſon I was in ſearch of, I made him a cordial tender of my aſſiſtance, and invited him to a participation of my fare. The offer came to him, poor man, at a convenient ſeaſon. It was now the depth of winter, and he honeſtly confeſſed to me, that his charms had ſo bad a run at Turſhiſh, that even a ſcanty meal was earned with difficulty.

The mollah, which was the title he had derived from his profeſſional ſkill, with a natural good temper, had acquired an accommodating diſpoſition; he was all things to all men; and he found a full exerciſe of thoſe qualities during our aſſociation. The little regularity I obſerved in our domeſtic ſyſtem, eſpecially in the hours of eating, was ſubject of frequent complaint

plaint to the mollah, who applied to the buſineſs of the kitchen, in which he had attained an eminent proficiency, with an active attention; nor was Sancho more attached to his prudence; and he alſo reprehended my diſregard to thoſe duties which he moſt favored. His cenſure generally conveyed an ejaculation of ſurprize, at the neglect of a concern the moſt important to man, or at my bad taſte, which he alledged, muſt have been vitiated in the courſe of my journeying through barbarous countries.

HAVING enjoyed during my acquaintance with this mollah ſo many conveniencies, and ſo pleaſing a quiet of mind, I often review the ſcene with ſenſible emotions of pleaſure. For my ſtrength, as well as my ſpirits, had been much exhauſted by the fatigues of the road, and various moleſtations neceſſarily incident to a traveller of my deſcription. The cold being intenſe and the country covered with ſnow, it became expedient in the firſt inſtance, to lay in a ſtock of fuel, which is a dear commodity at Turſhiſh, that we might at leaſt communicate an external heat to our bodies; for our creed precluded any interior cordial, nor durſt we even mention its name. But we were moderately recreated by a wholeſome diet, large fires, a clean hearth, with plenty of Perſian tobacco, which is of a moſt excellent kind.* When I have contemplated the progreſs of

* That produced at Tubbus, a town about one hundred miles to the ſouth-weſt of Turſhiſh, is eſteemed the beſt in Perſia.

my

my aſſociate in his culinary occupation, in mixing with care and earneſtneſs the ingredients of a hodge-podge, ſtirring it vigorouſly with a large wooden ſpoon, blowing and arranging the fire, till his eyes were red, I have been prompted to compare him to a Pruſſian ſerjeant, immerſed in the fury and enthuſiaſm of drilling a ſquad of recruits, and cudgelling into their bodies all the ability of their brains. Nor could one of our minute virtuoſos have been more inflated with pride at the diſcovery of a new ſpecies of ſnail, than the mollah, in demonſtrating the qualities of ſome favorite diſh.

The excellent ſervices of my companion now left me at liberty to walk about the town, collect information, and frequent the public baths. In the evening we were always at home, when the Mollah at the concluſion of our meal, either read a ſtory of Yuſuff and Zuleicha which he did but lamely, or opening his book of ſpells, he would expound the virtues of his noſtrums, which embraced ſo wide a compaſs, that few diſeaſes of the mind or body could reſiſt their force. They extended from recalling to the paths of virtue, the ſteps of a frail wife, and ſilencing the tongue of a ſcolding one, to curing chilbains, and deſtroying worms. His practice he told me, had been more extenſive than profitable, being chiefly employed by the lower claſſes of people; the rich rarely ſought his aid. He was meditating, he ſaid, which I had now obviated, a journey to Muſchid, where he would have been enabled to paſs the winter, a

ſeaſon

ſeaſon always of anxious care to him; as for the ſummer, he never beſtowed a thought on it.

THE duty of religion, at earlier loſing on the mollah, for out of the five daily prayers,* he uſually ſtruck off four, and on many days the omiſſion was total. But obſerving that I was yet more relaxed, he would gravely cenſure my negligence; not that I was degraded in his opinion, but it was neceſſary, he ſaid, to maintain a decorum of manners, that the people of the karavanſera might not make unfavourable remarks. The ſpirit and tendency of the mollah's obſervation, when impartially conſidered, diſcloſes the grand tenure by which the religion of Mahomet is at this day held. It is on the daily recital of five prayers,† waſhing as often, and a reſtriction from a certain food, that the Mahometan builds his hope of Paradiſe. And the reputation of ſuch a perſon, in Perſia, is equal to that of our men of virtue, honor, and humanity. Even to that of our man of faſhion.

* The firſt, a ſhort one, is ſaid before the break of day, the ſecond on the earlieſt appearance of light, a period uſually denominated the Wokt Nemaz, or time of prayer, the third about two hours before ſun-ſet, the fourth at the cloſe of the evening, this is alſo termed the Wokt Nemaz, and the fifth in the courſe of the night. The ſecond and fourth prayers are moſt regularly obſerved.

† I have ſeen grave long bearded Mahometans, retire a few ſteps from the exhibition of a laſcivious dance, and in the ſame apartment kneel to their prayers, which haſtily muttering, they returned to the amuſement.

ON

On the other ſide, he that ſhall neglect theſe ceremonies, though he may execute to an ample extent, the duties of a good citizen, is branded with the general mark of contumely; and ſhould his condition of life not be ſufficiently eminent to command reſpect, he is cut off from many of the benefits of ſociety. That I may point out to you more ſpecifically the opinion of a Mahometan on the eſſential efficacy of forms, I am induced to relate an obſervation of the mollah. In ſpeaking of an Afghan, who had himſelf acceſs to the karavanſera by an agreeable and friendly diſpoſition, he ſaid, that he willingly ſubſcribed to the compaſs of his moral merits, but was ſorry to ſee them vitiated by offering up his prayers with folded hands. Does it not aſtoniſh you, that the mind of a creature ſo exquiſitely formed, by the great lord of nature, ſhould have become ſo ſtrongly fettered by the ſhackles of prejudice, ſhould have formed ideas ſo derogatory of his infinite benevolence, as to be fearful of approaching his altar but in certain poſitions and flections of the body.

Travelling once with ſome Perſians on a ſultry day, and over an ill watered country, the party unexpectedly approached a ſmall ſtream, where haſtily diſmounting, I drank a cup of water with avidity, one of the Perſians who ſtood near me, cryed out in an earneſt tone, while I was finiſhing the draught, to reſerve a little in the bottom of the veſſel, and throw it on the ground with an

execration on the memory of Yezid.* On seeing that not a drop remained, he viewed me with evident marks of deteſtation, and pronounced me a kaufir. But Perſia has long loſt her men of genius and philanthrophy. The day of Ferdouſi, Sadi, and Hafiz, is ſet in barbarous darkneſs; and little elſe is now written or liſtened to, except the legends of prieſts, or the chimerical exploits of the twelve Imaums, which nearly quadrate in ſtyle and matter with our renowned nurſery hiſtories of Tom Thumb, or Jack the Giant-killer; though with a more pernicious effect; for the Perſian writings ſtrongly tend to eterniſe amongſt them a rancorous hatred to all thoſe of a different creed.

It is recorded that the cotemporaries of Hafiz, were ſo much offended at his bold diſquiſitions on the religion of the Koran, and witty ſtrictures on the looſe conduct of the clergy, that at his death, they heſitated to perform the uſual obſequies. Yet the later Perſians have not only acquitted Hafiz of any charge of irreligion, though almoſt every page of the poet refutes the poſition, but they aſſert, that under the cloak of his ſportive pleaſurable exhortations, he deſcribes the excellency of their faith, and the future happineſs of pious Mahometans.

While the mollah and I were enjoying the comforts of a commodious apartment, and ſavoury meſſes, made in rotation

* The chief who ſlew Huſſeyn the ſon of Ali.

of

of beef, mutton, and camels fleſh, on a ſudden, every room of the karavanſera was tumultuouſly filled by a large body of pilgrims * from the ſhrine of Muſchid. What an exuberance of zeal muſt have animated theſe devotees! which neither ſo diſtant and perilous a journey could deter, or the inclement ſeaſon of the year cool. The preſent winter was accounted more rigorous than had been for ſome years remembered, particularly in the quarter of Muſchid and Niſhabor, where two of theſe pilgrims had periſhed in the ſnow, and others had loſt their limbs by the ſeverity of the froſt.

In that band, which ruſhed into our apartment, was a perſon who ſeemed to take the avowed lead; he was better equipped than his aſſociates, and wore on his head the inſignia of a hadji;† a pilgrim, who ſupplied the place of a ſervant, began to reconnoitre the room, and as ſoon as he had noticed its ſituation, he diſlodged without ceremony, and with much facility from one of its corners, the very portable chattels of our poor mollah; and in the voice of authority, declared the place aſſigned to the uſe of the hadji, whom he repreſented to be of ſuperior rank and importance.

The hadji took his ſeat with a ſolemn air, and looking haughtily around, he threw his eye on me, and immediately aſked, or rather demanded my name and buſineſs. The queſtion was con-

* They were chiefly inhabitants of Tabriz, the ancient Taurus, I believe, a town in the province of Anderbeijan.

† In Perſia it is a ſtrip of cloth commonly green, rolled on the edge of the cap.

veyed in a manner which fully evinced the power of the interrogator; indeed I quickly ſaw, from the party's deference to him, the neceſſity of obſerving a reſpectful conduct to this ſuperb Mahometan. I told him that I was an Arab, travelling to Muſchid; but judge of my confuſion, when the hadji began to ſpeak in my ſuppoſed language. Endeavouring to ſuppreſs my embarraſſment at ſo complete a conviction of falſity, I obſerved, that I had aſſumed the name of an Arab, for the purpoſe of traveling with more ſafety; but that I was a native of Kaſhmire, proceeding on a mercantile concern to Mazanderan. Such ſtories, which in the eaſt may be deſcribed by the ſmoother term, ſimulation, are in common uſe among Aſiatic travellers; and unleſs other teſtimony corroborates their relations, little credit is given, nor is much expected. It is ſufficient that their true ſtory remains concealed.

This emendation of my account, produced no apparent ſurprize, nor any further interrogation; and from the mode of the hadji's behaviour, it was evident that I had not ſuffered in his opinion. The laſt year of my life had been occupied in an invaried ſcene of diſguiſe, with a language wholly fabricated to preſerve it; ſo that, God forgive me, I never wanted a ready tale for current uſe. I have now only to hope, that when it may be no longer expedient to ſupport the part hitherto ſo ſucceſsfully maintained, I ſhall be enabled to throw off the cloak with all its garniture for ever. The hadji was a reſident of Balfroſh, the principal town

town of Mazanderan, where he maintained a conſiderable traffic; he had joined the Tabrez pilgrims at Muſchid, and was now on the way back to his own province. The occaſion of accompanying this party was not to be foregone; as few roads are of more dangerous paſſage, than that from Turſhiſh to the Caſpian ſea, and conſequently not much frequented. The hadji, to whom I applied for a paſſage to Balfroſh, affected to lay various obſtacles in my way, and ſeeing my anxiety to proceed, he made his bargain conformably, that is, he ſtipulated for a double amount of the uſual hire.

The territory of Turſhiſh, which takes in about ——— miles from eaſt to weſt, and nearly half that ſpace in latitudinal direction, is held by Abedullah, an independant Perſian chief; he ſeems to be forty years of age, has a reſpectable appearance, and aſſumes that air of gravity which ſtrongly pervades the manners of the higher claſſes of Mahometans. His adminiſtration is well liked by the people, who ſeem to act and ſpeak very much at their eaſe. Paſſengers are never interrogated, nor is a paſſport required.

Adjoining to old Turſhiſh, called alſo Sultanabad, which is of ſmall compaſs, and ſurrounded with a wall, Abedulla has built a new town, in an angle of which ſtands the karavanſera, the only one I have ſeen in Perſia, which is not interiorly ſupplied with water. The chief and his officers reſide in the new quarter, where is alſo held the market, which the inhabitants ſay, has not been

ſo

ſo well ſupplied, ſince the Afghan troops have laid waſte the diſtricts of Muſchid, and thereby impeded the traffic of this quarter of Khoraſan.

The trade of Turſhiſh, ariſes chiefly from the import of indigo and other dyes from the weſtward, woollen cloths, and rice, which is ſcantily produced in this vicinity, from Herat. And the chief article of export ſeems to be iron, wrought in thick plates. The ſmall quantity of European cloths required at Turſhiſh, is brought from Mazanderan, by the way of Shahroot, or from Ghilan, by the way of the great road of Yezd. About one hundred Hindoo families from Moultan and Jeſſilmere, are eſtabliſhed in this town, which is the extreme limit of their emigration on this ſide of Perſia; they occupy a quarter in which no Mahometan is permitted to reſide, and where they conducted buſineſs without moleſtation or inſult: and I was not a little ſurprized to ſee thoſe of the Bramin ſect, diſtinguiſhed by the appellation of Peerzadah, a title which the Mahometans uſually beſtow on the deſcendants of their prophet. Small companies of Hindoos are alſo ſettled at Muſchid, Yezd, Kachan, Caſbin, and ſome parts of the Caſpian ſhore; and more extenſive ſocieties in the different towns of the Perſian Gulf, where they maintain a navigable commerce with the weſtern coaſt of India.

The departure of our kafilah now drawing near, the hadji purchaſed a horſe for my conveyance, with the money which I had advanced; but, not thinking my weight and baggage a ſufficient burthen

burthen for the animal, by no means a robuſt one, he added two heavy parcels of dying ſtuffs, on which I was to be ſeated. This was the moſt rapacious Mahometan I had yet known; not ſatisfied with the firſt extortion, he urged me without intermiſſion, for a loan of money, even the moſt trifling ſum; in other words, he wanted to cheat me. There are, I believe, few ſuch men amongſt us as Hadji Mahomet. He had the reputation of being an opulent merchant, and he was connected with perſons of the firſt rank in his country; his deportment was grave and dignified; his manners in common intercourſe were ſo forcibly inſinuating, that he never failed to pleaſe, even thoſe who knew and had experienced his ill qualities; he had, on the oſtenſible ſcore of devotion, made pilgrimages in Arabia, Turkey, and Perſia; he prayed with undeviating regularity five times in the day, beſides a long roll of ſupererogatory oriſons. Yet this man of property and rank, of polite manners, and profeſſed ſanctity, having in vain aimed at a larger ſum, importuned me in abject language to lend or give him half a crown. But my feelings having become callous, from a long aſſociation, I ſuppoſe, with thoſe who had none, I was enabled to withſtand, with intrepid coolneſs, the intreaties of the hadji, who ſeemed to take the refuſal nothing amiſs; indeed I imagine, he accounted me a perſon of diſcretion, and converſant in the buſineſs of the world.

That I might the better guard againſt a ſuſpicion of the character I repreſented, eſpecially in the mind of the hadji, who to

his

his other acquirements united insatiable inquisitiveness, I told him that I was a Sooni, imagining that the low estimation in which this sect is held in Persia, would prevent further notice. The hadji did not approve of this character, which was rarely seen, and much abhorred in this part of the country; nor would it be safe for a Sooni, he said, to travel in the society of Schiah pilgrims, who elevated by their late purification at Muschid, would assume a merit from insulting and ill treating me.

By the council of Hadji Mahomed I became a Schiah, and was received among the pilgrims without a scruple. It was, believe me, with no little concern, that I parted from the mollah, who had been to me an useful as well as a pleasant companion; and in the unreserved intercourse which had for some days subsisted between us, I experienced a pleasure, the more sensible, as my situation before had been solitary and irksome. In his dealings, I found him punctually honest, for conceiving an attachment to this harmless conjuror, I used to make enquiries at the places where he made his purchases for me, but never discovered a false charge.

On the morning of the 28th of December, left Turshish, and about noon arrived at the village of Killeelabad, two and a half fursungs. Our party consisting of about six or seven persons, the Tubrez having not yet joined, halted at a small karavanser, where being plentifully supplied with fuel by one of the villagers, to whom

whom our hadji was known, we paſſed a cold ſnowy night very comfortably.

On the 29th, at Hadjiabad, a ſmall fort, three furſungs. When the chief of this place was informed that Hadji Mahomed was our leader, for though of a diſtant province, he was well known in Khoraſan, we were invited to the fort, and hoſpitably entertained.

This day my horſe gave many tokens of inability to ſupport the heavy burthen that had been laid upon him. He eat little, ſweated much, and often ſtumbled. In one of his inclinations, I was thrown from my elevated ſeat with a violent ſhock, and received a violent contuſion on the hand. Inſtead of expreſſing any concern at the diſaſter, the hadji ſharply reprehended my want of ſkill, and predicted ill ſucceſs to my undertakings.

At Hadjiabad the pomegranates are of a delicious flavor, a property indeed of this fruit in moſt parts of Perſia. It has a thin ſoft ſkin, and contains a large quantity of juice, than which nothing in hot weather, or after fatigue can be more grateful. There is a ſpecies of the pomegranate, in Perſia and alſo in Afghaniſtan, whoſe granules are without ſeed, called the Redana;* it is of a ſuperior kind, and generally ſcarce.

On the 30th, at Nowblehuckum, three furſungs, a large and populous village, where our party was joined by the Tabrez pil-

* This word in the Perſic, ſignifies without ſeed.

grims. From Turſhiſh to this place, the general direction of the road, lay about weſt; the country is open and well cultivated, but like the eaſtern diviſion of Khoraſan, ſcantily ſupplied with wood and running water. At this place, my endeavour to procure a ſtock of wheat bread, to ſupport me during a three or four days journey over a deſert, which lay in the road, was wholly fruitleſs. The number of applicants for a like proviſion was ſo great, and their arguments from the late meritorious ſervice they had performed, was ſo much more efficacious than mine, that I was obliged to reſt ſatisfied with a few barley cakes.

BEING thrown by a ſort of chance, for the two laſt days, into the company of a Ghilan ſeid, who had been making the pilgrimage of Muſchid, we agreed after a ſhort preliminary, to place in a common ſtock our proviſions and good offices. Man you know of all created beings, is the leaſt fitted, and the leaſt deſirous to live alone. It is true, that if not ſunk by vice, or faſcinated by diſſipation, he will occaſionally fly from the fatigues of buſineſs, the rapid hurry of crowds, and ſeeking the ſhade of retirement, ſolace and exerciſe his intellectual faculties. But when he has breathed out his day of contemplation, he is often ſeen returning from the world he fled from, with a fond ſolicitude. It is not for me to expatiate on the pleaſures and uſes of ſociety, the ſubject has for ages fallen under the moſt extenſive and erudite diſcuſſion; nor can the pen of a journaliſt give it additional luſtre. I will now only obſerve, that after a tedious fatiguing journey, it was with a high

high reliſh, I ſat down to a homely meal with this ſeid, whoſe remarks and ſingular opinions on the ſubject of religion, never failed to give amuſement and information.

On the 31ſt, at Durroona, ſeven furſungs, a ſmall village, ſituate near the weſtern boundary of the territory of Abedullah, the road led in a weſtern direction through a barren country. In croſſing a ſteep rivulet, during this day's journey, my horſe precipitated me with the hadji's bags of dye into the middle of it, where we were diſcovered lying by this now enraged Mahometan. He ſmote his beard until his anger found utterance, when he poured on me a torrent of abuſe, and charging his ill fortune to my ſcandalous omiſſion of the ſtated prayers of a Muſſulman, he declared that I ſhould indemnify the loſs of his paint to the laſt farthing.

On the 1ſt January, 1784, having travelled eight furſungs, through a deſert, which was interſperſed with low hills and a thin ſcattering wood, we halted on an eminence, where the ſnow which covered it, ſupplied our water. My horſe became ſo much enfeebled, that he was unable to carry me with the other part of his load; and I ſhould have been left on the ground, had not ſome of the paſſengers who were apprized of the extraordinary ſum which I had paid for hire, warmly expoſtulated with the hadji on the injuſtice of his conduct; ſomewhat abaſhed at the remonſtrance, and fearful perhaps of a more general attack on the many weak ſides of his character, the hadji procured a horſe, from a perſon who was proceeding two ſtages on our road,

and who for a ſmall gain, conſented to diſmount and incur an exceſſive fatigue.

The domeſtic aſſociate of Hadji Mahomed, having ſeen his patron treat me with neglect, and often with rudeneſs, thought that he might with impunity indulge a like ſpirit; but ſeeing no reaſon to ſhew him the reſpect which I obſerved to the hadji, I was provoked this evening to give him a ſmart chaſtiſement, and in the Engliſh manner; a ſpecies of attack as novel to him as it was efficacious, and which ſurprized the pilgrims, who beſtowed on me a general applauſe. In this occurrence, you will perceive the eſſential advantages of my Mahometan character: for in my real one no affront, however inſolent, or opprobrious could have warranted any active reſentment; the only reſource would have been a ſilent patience; it is indeed often neceſſary to aſſuage the offender's wrath, to avert a further outrage. The penalty that would probably be inflicted on a Chriſtian, hardy enough to lift his hand in this part of Perſia, againſt a Mahometan, would be a heavy fine or ſevere corporal puniſhment.

The Armenians who viſit moſt of the quarters of weſtern Aſia, are ſeldom ſeen on this road, dreading equally the inimical diſpoſition and inveterate prejudices of the inhabitants to all thoſe of a different faith, and the incurſions of the Turkoman Tartars.

On the 2d, at Towrone, five furſungs, a ſmall fortified village, ſituate in the diſtricts of Iſmael Khan, an independant chief, who alſo claims the deſert, extending from Deronne to this place; nor is

it

it probable that the property will ever be diſputed. Many travellers, it is ſaid, have periſhed in this track, from the intenſe heats and a ſcarcity of water, which in the courſe of the firſt ſtage, is procured but in one ſpot, by digging ſmall wells.

We learned that a party of fifty Turcoman horſe, had yeſterday paſſed under the walls of Towrone, in the way to their own country. Theſe fierce free-booters who wage a common war on the Perſians, enſlave as well as plunder thoſe who fall into their hands. To prevent an eſcape, the captives are ſent into the interior parts of the country, where they are employed in tending the numerous droves of cattle and horſes, with which Tartary abounds. They are alſo occaſionally ſold to the Kalmucks, the moſt rude and ſavage of all the Tartar race.* A ſlavery with theſe is ſpoken of with horror;

* One of the names of a native of Tartary, in the language of his country, is Tatter and Tattaur. Having often indulged a curioſity in ſearching for the etimology of Aſiatic names, which though not tending to the developement of any important facts, may reflect ſubordinate lights, I have been induced to inſert ſome of them in this place.

The term, Ferung or Feringhee, a name commonly applied at this day among moſt of the nations of Aſia, except the Chineſe, ſeems to be derived from Frank, an appellation by which the Cruſade Chriſtians were indiſcriminately deſcribed by the inhabitants of Aſia Minor.

Saracen one of the names formerly given to the people of Arabia, may on a ground fair enough be deduced from Sahara, which in the Arabic, ſignifies a deſert, and may with equal propriety be given to the inhabitant of a barren region, as the term Highlander, among us, to the reſident of a mountainous country; and I am the more induced to adopt the probable truth of this derivation, as it was pointed out to me by the moſt accurate ſcholar (the preſent Archbiſhop of York) of our Country.

The

horror, and accounted worſe than death. The Turcomans of this day, are a tribe of no important note; and their military operations are directed chiefly to the attack of karavans and defenceleſs villages. They are no longer that great and powerful people which produced a Zinjis and a Timur; the conquerors of Aſia, whoſe poſterity were ſeen in this country, ſeated on the moſt ſplendid throne of the world. It is now received as a general poſition of hiſtory, that thoſe immenſe bodies of ſoldiers which ſpread over and ultimately ſubdued the dominion of Rome, under the name of Goths and Vandals, were the Tartars of Bochara, Kheiva and the ſhores of the Caſpian. The preſent chief of the Turcoman tribe, reſides at Bochara, where he keeps a moderate court, and exerciſes a very limited power. The Tartars of the more eaſtern regions, the modern conquerors of China, who may be ranged under the common deſignation of Kalmucks and Monguls, are divided into various roving herds, and would ſeem to be no longer a cauſe of dread to the ſouthern nations of Aſia.

PREPARING this morning to proceed, I could neither find the horſe I had ridden yeſterday, nor its maſter, who it appeared had proceeded alone an hour before the departure of the party. The

The Mahometan ſubjects of the Ottoman empire, are known in Europe by the common name of Turks, which immediately accords with one of the grand deſignations uſed by the Tartars, who wreſted that region from the Arabian khaliphat. And a cauſe of a ſimilar nature has probably induced many of the Hindoo traders, to apply the ſame denomination to the Mahometans of India.

road

road being covered with a deep ſnow, it was with great fatigue and exertions I could overtake the deſerter, who frankly ſaid, that he was apprehenſive of not being paid by the hadji, but, that if I wou'd anſwer for the payment of the hire, I mig' immediately mount his ſteed. The adjuſtment being ſpeedily made, I rode on to Towrone; from whence I ſent back this ſame perſon, on whom money had irreſiſtible force, to bring the hadji's tired horſe, which I learned from ſome of the paſſengers, was ſcarcely able to crawl. Fearful of being altogether abandoned by Hadji Mahomet, I found it neceſſary to ſpeak to him in unreſerved language, which was ſtrongly ſupported by a Perſian merchant, whoſe notice I had acquired, and after much oppoſition, became ſucceſsful.

On the 3d, the kafilah halted in a deſert, eight furſungs, at a ſmall ſtream, the only water ſeen in the courſe of this day's journey; the Ghilan ſeid and I had filled our bottle for mutual uſe, and the bread, cheeſe, and onions, which ſupplied our evening meal, giving me a violent thirſt, I made frequent applications to our water ſtock. The ſeid, ſeeing that I had taken more than a juſt portion, required that the reſidue ſhould be reſerved for his ceremonial ablutions.

While the ſeid retired to pray, I went in ſearch of fuel, and returning firſt to our quarter, I haſtily drank off the remaining water, and again betook myſelf to wood-cutting, that I might not be diſcovered near the empty veſſel by my aſſociate, who had naturally an irascible temper. When I ſuppoſed he had

had returned from his prayer, I brought in a large load of wood, which I threw on the ground with an air of great fatigue, and of having done a meritorious service. "Aye," says he, "while "I like a true believer have been performing my duty to God, "and you toiling to procure us firing for this cold night, "some hardened kaufir, who I wish may never drink again in "this world, has plundered the pittance of water which was "set apart for my ablutions." He made strict search among our neighbours for the perpetrator of this robbery, as he termed it, but receiving no satisfactory information, he deliberately delivered him or them to the charge of every devil in the infernal catalogue, and went grumbling to sleep.

On the 4th, at Khanahoody, eight furlongs, a fortified and populous village, the residence of Ismael Khan, who possesses a small, independant territory in this quarter. The road from Towrone, led in a western direction, through a desert track, interspersed with low and bare hills.

About three miles to the eastward of Khanahoody, a chain of mountains, of the medium altitude, extends in a north and south direction, whose western face is considerably higher than that to the eastward. This branch of hills, which seem to have a long scope, has effected a grand change in the course of the running waters. The streams on the western side, have a south-west current, and flow, I imagine, into the Caspian sea, or into the head of the gulf of Persia, while those on the

eastern

eaſtern ſide, are probably carried to the more ſouthern ſhores of the Gulf.

FROM the ſummit of the Khanahoody hills, is ſeen, to the weſt and north-weſt, a wide extended plain, thickly covered with villages and arable lands; nor does a riſing ground in this direction interrupt the utmoſt ſcope of the eye. Here I muſt note, that this quarter of Perſia has now aſſumed its moſt unfavorable appearance; it being the depth of winter, when little vegetation is ſeen on the ground, and not a leaf on the trees. This day died an old man of our party, who had been long ailing; and what was rather ſingular, his death happened while he was on horſeback.

ON the 5th, at Bearjumund, three furſungs, a populous village in the diſtricts of Iſmael Khan. Halted on the 6th, on account of the ſickneſs of our kafilah director. Two of the pilgrims who were carpenters, made a litter for him, which was furniſhed with poles like a ſedan, and carried by two mules, one of which was yoked before and the other behind the ſeat.

ON the 7th, at Naſirabad, nine furſungs, a ſmall fortreſs in ruins, ſituate on an eminence. We paſſed at about midway through two uninhabited villages near each other, Kow and Kauff, noted places of rendezvous of the Turkoman banditti, and ſtanding on one of the grand roads from Perſia into Tartary. On approaching Naſirabad, I obſerved numerous bones of a large ſize ſtrewed on the ground, and which I learned were

the remains of ſome of the elephants of Nadir Shah, who had ordered them to be ſent into the ſouthern provinces, where the warmth of climate is better adapted to the health of thoſe animals; but many of them died on the journey.

PERSIA, ſince its empire has been rent into pieces, has ſuffered ſevere devaſtations, and has been grievouſly depopulated. The various petty chiefs, who hold themſelves but the rulers of a day, are often incited to oppreſs the inhabitants, and impoſe heavy taxes on the merchant; yet theſe exactions might receive ſome alleviation, did the governors exert any active efforts in defending their diſtricts from the depredations of the Tartars, who, even in parties of a hundred, are ſcouring the country from Muſchid to the Caſpian ſea; and in the courſe of this laſt year, a body of them, leſs than a thouſand, had penetrated to the environs of Iſpahan. Such acts of unreſtrained violence, marked with every ſpecies of barbarity, will point out ſome of the evils, which have this day overwhelmed Perſia, which muſt remain ſunk in this inglorious obſcurity, until ſome future hero ſhall deſtroy the preſent pigmy race, and raiſing the ſtructure of a new empire, ſhall collect its ſtrength, and impart to it vigorous action.

ALL the towns, villages, and even the ſmalleſt hamlets in the northern diviſion of Perſia, though but at the diſtance of half a mile from each other, are ſurrounded with walls, which ſeem to have been erected more as a ſhelter againſt domeſtic robbery and private feuds, than the aſſault of an enemy. In conſidering

conſidering the perpetual alarms, ſolicitude and machinations, which muſt neceſſarily agitate the inhabitants of this region, we are at a loſs, whether to conſider them more as objects of reproach for the depravity of their manners, or of pity, at viewing the ſtate of national debaſement, to which they have been precipitated by the declenſion of their empire.

On the 8th, at Shahroot, alſo called Buſtan, four furſungs, a ſmall but populous town. From Nowblehuckum, the road lay abou tweſt to Towrone, whence it had, I apprehend, a weſt by north direction to Shahroot.* The horſe which I had hired from the hadji to carry me to Mazanderan, having died this day, I was detained on the road to take care of my little chattels, which muſt have been loſt, had not ſome of my kafilah acquaintances each conveyed a portion, though their horſes were much jaded.

Passing over a fertile well watered plain, which ſurrounds, to a wide ſpace, the town of Shahroot, I came late in the evening to the karavanſera, where I found the Ghilan ſeid in poſſeſſion of an apartment, which he had taken for our joint uſe. The cold was here extremely intenſe, and had reached the point, which the Perſians with a peculiar force of expreſſion, term the Zerb Zimmiſtan, the ſtroke of winter. The ſnow fell thickly about us,

* The Tabrez pilgrims left Shahroot, about five miles to the right or weſtward, and proceeded towards their own country by the way of Sianna and Caſbin.

and the piercing north wind made every creature ſhrink from its blaſt; nor were there many cordials at hand to qualify theſe rigors.

FIRING is ſcarcer here than in any part of Khoraſan; it is of a bad quality for fuel, and much of it is of a green wood. Our lodging had no aperture but the door, which the ſeid, to ſcreen himſelf from the cold kept ſhut; nor could my moſt earneſt intreaty obtain any opening for the diſcharge of the ſmoke. The only material differences indeed exiſting between us, aroſe from this, and another deſpotic arrangement of the ſeid, which uſed to cauſe ſome warm debates.

IT was my buſineſs, being the more active member, to purchaſe and bring in fuel, and before day light, to procure water and a light to warm the ſeid, and enable him to perform the ablution preparatory to prayer, an omiſſion of which he would have dreaded as the precurſor of ſome dire calamity. The ſeid conſented to kindle the fire, an office which I could never perform without ſuffering acute pain in my eyes from the ſmoke. Thus were our labours, on principles fair enough, mutually divided; but when we came to enjoy the fruits of it, this deſcendant of his prophet, wrapped in a large cloak made of ſheep ſkins, would take ſo unaccommodating a poſt at, or rather over our ſmall fire, which was in a manner embraced by the extended ſkirts of his garment, that I received no warmth; and I ſhould not have known that a fire was in the room, but for a profuſion of ſmoke. I never remem-

ber

ber to have ſuffered ſo much inconveniency from the cold; nor could all my wardrobe, heaped at once on my body, keep me from ſhivering. My anger would often break out to an extreme height at the ſeid's total ſeizure of the fire-place, and excited very impaſſioned language; but which he never failed to allay, by ſetting forth, that he was old, and infirm, that he had foregone all his domeſtic comforts, which were many, to viſit in the depth of winter a diſtant ſhrine, and that in conſideration of a deed ſo meritorious, and alſo of his holy deſcent, it was my duty to aſſiſt and indulge his wants.

My diſpoſition towards him, and a knowledge of moſt of the facts ſet forth, made his arguments unanſwerable; and in return for the ſurrender of the hearth, I was invited to Ghilan, where he promiſed to give me a wife out of his family, and ſuitable proviſion for my maintenance. Such was the ordinary reſult of our bickerings, and it always tended to make the connection more cordial. In my little diſputes on the road, the ſeid gave me vigorous ſupport, and when any particular enquiry was made about my perſon, which it ſometimes produced, he would immediately aſſert that I belonged to him. I have been received as his ſon, by thoſe who only knew us en paſſant; nor did our appearance diſcredit the belief, for we were naturally of a fair complexion, of the ſame ſtature, with greyiſh eyes.

At Shahroot we were frequently viſited by a Mazanderan ſhoe-

ſhoemaker,* the moſt effervereſcent zealot, that ever counted his beads or entered a moſque. Having thrown aſide his tools, and committed the ſhop to the management of his wife, [illegible] out the greateſt portion of his property on a horſe, [illegible] koran, and made the grand tour of all the celebrated pilgrimages in Perſia. But he grievouſly lamented that the narrow ſtate of his fortunes, would not permit a viſitation at the holy tomb of his prophet, which only could make his death eaſy, and his aſſurance of Heaven well founded. Excluſive of the ordained prayers, he practiſed many of a ſubſidiary quality, which might be termed the half notes of ſupplication, and theſe were inceſſantly whined out with a deep naſal tone; and ſometimes when his ſpirit was violently agitated, he would diſcharge them with a bellow, as if he meant to batter down the gates of Paradiſe by ſtorm.

This ſhoemaker was a little man, extremely irascible, and though immerſed in devotion, he did not ſhew the ſmalleſt remiſſion in the management of his temporal concerns. In an altercation with the ſeid, about the adjuſtment of a very ſmall account, not more than three halfpence, a furious conteſt aroſe which terminated wholly in favor of the ſhoemaker, his language which run with an obſtreperous fluency, ſtunned and greatly ter-

* The Perſian ſhoemaker is not as in India of the loweſt ranks of the people, but claſſes among the moſt reputable tradeſmen of his country.

rified

rified my companion, who hearing himself in a breath called Chriſtian, Jew, and Infidel, fled from the combat with precipitancy. This ſaid ſhoemaker, by an ill-timed intruſion, had diſcovered me taking ſome money out of my purſe; and immediately retiring, declared to all the people of the karavanſera, that the kachmiry, my travelling name at that time, was poſſeſſed of a large treaſure in gold and diamonds, which he himſelf had ſeen.

SUCH a diſcovery in a country governed even by the moſt ſalutary laws, might have endangered my property and perſon, but in this quarter of the world, where a man's throat is often cut for the fee ſimple of his cloak, it placed me in eminent peril. But the chain of favorable events, little ſtrengthened by my own merits, which had propitiouſly conducted me from the banks of the Ganges, through many an inhoſpitable track, ſtill continued to lead me on ſafely.

HAVING no important matter to lay before you, I muſt extend my egotiſms, and inform you that Hadji Mahomet, having now arrived in the territory of the Mazanderan chief, by whom he was favored, threw off all reſerve; he plainly told me, that inſtead of looking to him for a future conveyance, I ſhould think myſelf fortunate in not being charged with the price of his horſe, and the damage done to his wares. Seeing him equally empowered as diſpoſed to do me an injury, I cheerfully cancelled my engagements with him, on the proviſo of obtaining his protection during the journey to Mazanderan.

SHAH-

SHAHROOT, with its independant diſtricts including Shahr-abad, pertains properly, I believe, to the Khoraſan [illegible] it now holds of Aſterabad,* which with Mazande[illegible] Tirreeb is governed by Aga Mahomed Khan, [illegible] important chiefs, now remaining in Perſia. The t[illegible] is ſmall and ſurrounded in ſome parts with a fli[illegible] The houſes from a want of wood are built of unburnt bricks, and covered with a flat arch of the ſame materials.

MANY people are ſeen in this vicinity, whoſe noſes, fingers, and toes, have been deſtroyed by the froſt, which is ſaid to be ſeverer at Shahroot, than any part of Perſia. The principal traffick of this diſtrict ariſes from the export of cotton, unwrought and in thread, to Mazanderan; and the returns from thence are made in Ruſſian bar-iron and ſteel, a little broad-cloth, chiefly of Dutch manufacture, copper and cutlery. Sugar, from its high price, being rarely uſed by the lower claſs of Perſians, they have adapted to its purpoſes a ſyrup, called Sheerah, made of the inſpiſſated juice of grapes; but it ſeemed to be of an irritating and inflammable quality; and moſt of them mix with their food the expreſſed juice of the ſour pomegranate, which makes a high flavored and ſalubrious acid.

ON the the 17th of January, I joined a cotton kafilah, and

* Shahroot lyes about one hundred miles to the eaſtward of the town of Aſterabad.

proceeded

proceeded to Dhey* Mollah, a ſmall walled village, four furſungs. The horſe which I had hired at Shahroot was ſtrong and well paced, and promiſed to be a very valuable acquiſition, as a great part of the Mazanderan road, lies over a mountainous country, covered with foreſts and interſected by rapid ſtreams.

At Dhey Mollah, the ſeid and I were entertained with cordial hoſpitality; a benefit wholly aſcribed to the inherent and contingent virtues of my companion, who from deſcent, as well as his late arduous pilgrimage, had a twofold claim on the benevolence of his countrymen. I ſhould be deficient indeed, in ordinary gratitude, did I not feel the kind offices of this ſeid, who ſmoothed the many inconveniencies which often croſſed my way, and procured for me accommodations not attainable by common travellers. The fruits of this village, ſome of which were yet freſh, are in great eſtimation, particularly the pomegranet, which is not inferior to that of Hadjiabad. This quarter of Perſia produces a variety of vegetables, as cabbages, carrots, peas, and turnips; the latter of an excellent kind, and compoſes in the ſeaſon a principal portion of the food of the inhabitants.

On the 18th, at Tauck, a ſmall fort, five and a half furſungs. This day an intenſe froſt, which had congealed all the ſtanding water, kept me ſhivering with cold during the firſt part of the journey. About eight miles to the ſouth-eaſt of Tauck, ſtands

* Dhey in the Perſic, ſignifies a village.

on a ſpacious plain, the town of Dumgam, whoſe lofty minarets are ſeen at a great diſtance. This plain has become famous, in the latter annals of Perſia, for a victory obtained by Nadir Shah, before the period of his ſovereignty, over the Afghan Ashruf, who then held poſſeſſion of Iſpahan. The battle which was ſevere but deciſive, twelve of thirty thouſand Afghans being it is ſaid, either killed or taken, advanced Nadir high in the eſtimation of Shah Thamas, who was preſent in the action. As a diſtinguiſhed mark of his favor, and one of the moſt honourable, which the Perſian princes uſed to confer on a ſubject, he permitted Nadir to be denominated the royal ſlave, by the title of Thamas Kuli.*

It would afford me a ſenſible pleaſure, were I enabled to point out to you, any monuments of the former grandeur and magnificence of the Perſian empire, which has been ſeen to run a long courſe of glory, and to often combat with ſucceſs the legions of Rome; yet where are now the Roman eagles, that were wont to ſtun the world with the cry of victory? Where are now the ſteeled bands of Perſia, who inſulted the corſe of a Roman general and exhibited a captive Cæſar, as a gazing ſtock to barbarous nations? They have been ſmote by the deſtructive hand of time, which points with deriſion at their puny race, and at the inſtability of

* This event which is mentioned in Frazer's account of Nadir Shah, happened in the year 1729.

human

human power. It is in the ſouth of Perſia, where the relics of its ancient grandeur are to be ſought, but even there, the miſ-ſhapen ruins of Babylon and Perſepolis faintly mark the priſtine grandeur and coſtly taſte of its princes.

THE upper provinces, though affording the grand ſupply of brave and hardy ſoldiers, were rarely viſited by the luxurious monarchs of Perſia, who dreading the bleak air and barren aſpect of the north, eſtabliſhed their reſidence in milder climates, whither they carried the improvements of knowledge and the refinements of art. Among the inſtitutions beſt fitted to give permanency to the Perſian empire, were it inveſted with individual ſovereignty, policy would urge the removal of its capital to Khoraſan, famous for the ſalubrity of its air, and the military ability of its inhabitants. Its ſituation is alſo well adapted for checking the incurſions of the Tartar and Afghan nations, and it poſſeſſes a city,* held by the Perſians, in enthuſiaſtic reverence.

ISPAHAN and Shiraz, ſeated in the centre of a country enjoying a ſoft ſerenity of air, and replete with the various incitements to luxury, muſt ſoon enervate their inhabitants and promote the influence of corruption. The Perſians ſay that, Kareem Khan, one of the late chiefs of the ſouthern provinces, was often urged by his officers to carry his arms into Khoraſan, a conqueſt

* Muſchid.

which would neceſſarily have given him the ſupreme dominion of Perſia; but though brave and enterprizing, he had too long indulged in the pleaſures of Shiraz, and uſed to palliate his reluctance to the propoſed expedition, by obſerving that after a long and dangerous ſiege of a ſmall fort, nothing would be found in it, but a few bags of chopped ſtraw for his horſe. Yet he muſt have been aware that Khoraſan would have reinforced his army with thoſe ſoldiers, who empowered Nadir to expel the Turks and Afghans from Perſia, and overthrow the empire of India. The northern regions were long the nurſery of a hardy and predatory militia, who from their bleak plains and mountains, were wont to pour their force upon the nations of the ſouth, but who in their turn felt the force of fiercer and more barbarous tribes, until continued emigrations waſted the ſtock, and witheld the power of foreign conqueſt.

On the 19th, at Killautau, five and a half furſungs, an open village ſituate on the declivity of a hill. This day's journey led over a gradual aſcent, interſperſed with low wood, and ſcattered ſpaces of arable land. This being the laſt ſtation on the road, where bread is to be procured on the eaſt ſide of the Mazanderan limits, I procured a neceſſary ſupply.

On the 20th, at Killaufir, five and a half furſungs, a range of ruined buildings on an eminence, a mile's diſtance to the northward of the ſmall village of Hirroos. The proprietor of my horſe, a carrier, went out of the road from this place to viſit his family reſidence,

dence, and wiſhed much to carry me with him; the deviation from our track being but ſhort, I had conſented to the propoſal, and was about turning into the path which led to his village, when Hadji Mahomet arrived and prevented me.

As this was among the very few marks of goodneſs which I experienced from the hadji, to notice it, is but ſimple juſtice to his character, of which perhaps, you are already impreſſed with an ill opinion. Taking me aſide, he enjoined me, in a manner which evinced an honeſt concern, not on any pretence to proceed to the carrier's village; that the ſtory of the ſhoemaker had circulated a general belief of my great wealth, and that the carriers had been heard in concerting ſchemes to rob, and even deſtroy me; that if ſuch was their deſign, there were few actions, he obſerved, however atrocious, which theſe men would not perpetrate, when plunder was the object; and that the ſituation of the village, which was detached and inhabited only by their families, would equally facilitate the purpoſe, as preclude a diſcovery.

This repreſentation determined me againſt leaving the party; but having before conſented to accompany the carrier, to whom the cauſe of the refuſal could not be aſſigned, I impoſed the taſk upon the hadji, who immediately making it his own buſineſs, told the carrier, in a ſtern tone, that as I was under his charge, he would not permit me to be ſeparated from him. Though the carrier continued to urge his purpoſe by a long and

ſtrenuous

ſtrenuous argument, he was overruled by the hadji, who by ſome degree of compulſion, conſigned my horſe to the charge of another perſon. As we rode on, the hadji congratulated my near eſcape from a combination, which muſt have been fatal to my perſon, or deprived me of my property; for that many robberies were committed in theſe parts, and uſually accompanied by murder.

THIS night I lodged in the remains of a bath, which ſeemed to have pertained to ſome place of greater note, than the appearance of the adjacent ruins indicated. The Ghilan ſeid had not joined me in the latter part of the journey, according to a uſage obſerved by us, for adjuſting the concerns of our evening meal, but more prudently went to Hirroos, where he was well received. Being now habituated to the ſeid's company, which had become equally amuſing and convenient, for even our little diſputes had a riſible tendency, I ſenſibly felt its loſs. Though our acquaintance was of ſuch ſhort duration, I already began to eſteem this man as a truſty friend; ſo natural and immediate is the propenſity to cleave to what gives us ſolace and relieves our anxiety; nor is any object more completely veſted with this property, than a pleaſant companion.

CORDIAL connections and the interchange of good offices, no where make a quicker progreſs than in the courſe of a journey. Travellers, aware of the approach of a period, which is to cauſe a general, probably a final ſeparation, occupy to the beſt advantage the limited extent of their aſſociations; and as few ſelfiſh views have

have time to ſpring up, theſe contingent compacts uſually abound in good humour and good faith. In India, they have in common circulation, as a ſentence expreſſive of the pleaſures ariſing from curſory ſocieties and parties, caſually formed, "Enjoy this meeting as a gift ſnatched from fate; for the hour of departure ſtands on your head." Being now about to enter a province, different in its aſpect and production from that of Khoraſan, I will here draw the line of diviſion, which may be done with the more propriety at Killauſir, as it will alſo mark the eaſtern limit of Hazaar Jireeb,* a ſmall diſtrict dependant on Mazanderan.

From Shahroot, the road has nearly a weſtern direction, through a country generally open. Low hills are alſo ſeen at wide intervals. The ſoil is a mixture of ſand and earth, and well cultivated as far as the vicinity of Killantau, where the vallies become more contracted, and leave but ſmall ſpaces for agriculture. The ſides of the hills are chiefly appropriated to the paſtures of ſheep, which are numerous and of an excellent kind.

On the 21ſt, at Challoo, four furſungs, a ſmall open village, on the eaſtern ſide of the baſe of a ſteep hill, and cloſe on the brink of a rapid ſtream, which was daſhed with a bold and beautiful effect on the rocks that lay thickly ſcattered in its bed. We had now entered a country overſpread with mountains and foreſts, in which were many oak trees, but their dwarfiſh appearance

* Hazaar in the Perſic, ſignifies a thouſand, and Jireeb, a meaſurement of Land.

ſhewed

ſhewed that they wanted a kinder ſoil and climate. At Challoo, the ſeid largely reaped the fruits of his pilgrimage and his ſacred deſcent. He and conſequently his aſſociate, for he never failed to divide with me the good things which fell to his lot, were lodged in a moſque, and hoſpitably treated by the inhabitants, who ſupplied us in the firſt inſtance with great ſtore of fuel, which enabled us to hold out againſt a heavy ſtorm of ſnow, and a piercing north wind; and without which, indeed, our ſpacious and airy apartment muſt have been untenable.

It was with pleaſure I again ſaw an open village; it exhibited a ruſtic ſimplicity and a peaceful confidence, which I think could not have exiſted within a rampart. The inhabitants alſo, if their kindneſs to us has not biaſſed me too much in their favor, ſeemed to be more civilized and humane, than the people of Khoraſan. The houſes here are built with flat roofs, ſupported with large beams, which the adjacent foreſts plentifully ſupply. A continuance of the ſtorm, detained us on the 22d, at Challoo, where we found no abatement of the hoſpitality of the inhabitants, who furniſhed every thing that could render our ſituation commodious.

On the 23d, in the morning, our party moved and penetrated through a mountainous country, interſected with rivulets, and cloſely covered with large trees, which being ſtripped of their leaves, I could not aſcertain the different ſpecies, nor could the carriers, whoſe only knowledge ſeems to conſiſt in driving horſes. Halted,

at

at the diſtance of five furſungs from Challoo, under ſome trees, about one hundred yards from the ſide of the road, where we kept a large fire burning throughout the night; not for deterring the attack of wild beaſts, which are not numerous in theſe woods, but to qualify the intenſe coldneſs of the air.

On the 24th, proceeded five furſungs through the foreſt. In the evening, while I was riding alone, the party, which had proceeded a ſhort way before me, turned quickly into the wood, and came to their ſtation-ground. It was in vain that I endeavoured to trace any marks of men or horſes; for the ground to a great extent was ſtrewed with leaves. My horſe, on having for ſome time loſt ſight of the party, became reſtleſs, and I thought much terrified. It neighed inceſſantly, and though a willing, active animal, would not move in any direction but with reluctance. My ſituation grew alarming; it was growing dark, and I found myſelf bewildered in an immenſe foreſt, with ſcarcely the hope of obtaining relief during that night.

In ſearching for a ſpot to faſten the horſe, and lay myſelf down, good fortune threw in my way two men, who were driving a loaded bullock and an aſs. Without noticing my embarraſſment, which they might have made an ill uſe of, or even making any enquiries, I learned that a part of the kafilah had proceeded on the road which they were purſuing, and going with them about two miles, I found Hadji Mahomet, with ſome other paſſengers, refreſhing themſelves on a ſmall plain, ſkirted by a ſtream of

water. The proprietor of the horſe, who had followed, expreſſed much diſpleaſure at my quitting him, which he aſcribed to the council of the hadji, whom he ſpoke of with a ſneer, and laughed at the ſort of protection which I had choſen.

On this night was ſeen by moſt of the paſſengers, a ſtar, with a brightly illuminated tail, which I apprehend, from its form and quick motion, muſt have been a comet. Hadji Mahomet now became profuſe in his offers of ſervice; he promiſed me every accommodation at Mazanderan, as a ſupply of cloths, for I was ill apparelled, a proper place of lodging, and to diſpatch me with ſafety to the quarter of my deſtination. This man, though one of the moſt acute and knowing of his ſect, did not ſeem to entertain any idea of my being a Chriſtian; yet he ſuſpected the truth of my narrative, or rather, he did not believe a word of it; but imagined that I was a trader in jewels, which were concealed about my perſon.

Desirous of knowing the ſtate of the Ruſſian navigation, on the Caſpian ſea, I had ſought the information with too much earneſtneſs, which created a ſuſpicion at Shahroot, that I was a Ruſſian, eſcaped from the captivity of the Tartars, and returning to my own country. But this conjecture ceaſed, when it was known that I had come from the eaſtern ſide of Perſia.

On the 24th, proceeded five furſungs, through the foreſt. The greateſt part of this day's journey, lying over ſteep hills of a moiſt clayey ſoil, became of difficult acceſs to our cattle.

The

The carriers of this road, uſually employ mares for the conveyance of merchandize, being more tractable than ſtallions, and requiring leſs attendance. They are indeed as quiet as any domeſtic animal, and though feeding at large, during the night, they never ſtrayed from the vicinity of the ſtation.

'On returning this evening, from a ſmall excurſion into the foreſt, I found that my Ghilan aſſociate had left his quarter, and gone over to the perſon who has been before mentioned, as the travelling aſſiſtant of Hadji Mahomet. He was alſo a native of Ghilan, well known to the ſeid, and being ſtout and hale, had previouſly to their departure, agreed to be the ſeid's aſſiſtant during the pilgrimage; it was a concern of moment to this old infirm man, in the various accidents to which a long and harraſſing journey was liable, to have ſo capable a companion; and the Ghilanee, to corroborate the ſincerity of his offer, had formally pledged himſelf on the koran. There was every reaſon to credit the ſeid's relation of this compact, for he was an inviolable obſerver of the truth, and I have myſelf often witneſſed the ill treatment which he experienced from his countrymen. But being now near home, where a retaliation might be feared, he had aſſumed ſo genuinely the ſemblance of contrition, that in the ſpace of my ſhort abſence, the ſeid's full forgiveneſs was obtained, and the promiſe of future union. On ſeeing me, the ſeid ſeemed embarraſſed, but ſaid nothing, and while I was preparing a ſlender ſupper, my attention was roufed by a loud noiſe of altercation

from the Ghilan quarter, where I ſaw a furious debate waging between the members of the new alliance. The old pilgrim ſoon returned to me, entreating with many confeſſions of his credulous folly, to occupy his former ſtation.

On the 25th, completed, in a journey of five furſungs, the paſſage of the foreſt, and halted on its weſtern edge. This day we frequently croſſed the Mazanderan river, which, after winding in various directions, takes a northweſt courſe through the flat quarter of the province, and falls into the Caſpian ſea at Muſchid Sir. This ſtream is rapid among the hills, but fordable for laden horſes. And on reaching the plains, it flows with an eaſy current. At a toll-houſe within the ſkirt of the foreſt, the merchants paid a ſmall duty, and I was aſſeſſed a few pence, on the ſcore of being a ſtranger.

In my way through this extenſive foreſt, I did not ſee the veſtige of a habitation, nor any culture, except ſome very narrow ſtrips of land, thinly interſperſed at the baſe of the hills. But the vallies now opened and exhibited a pleaſing picture of plenty and rural quiet. The villages all open and neatly built; the verdant hills and dales, encircled by ſtreams of delicious water, preſented a ſcene that gave the mind ineffable delight. The air, though in winter, was mild, and had the temperature of an Engliſh climate in the month of April. This change of weather, effected within ſo ſhort a ſpace of time, ariſes from the low ſituation of the province, its near vicinity to the Caſpian ſea, and the

ſhelter

ſhelter of the adjacent mountains. The ſheep in numerous flocks were feeding on all ſides, but they are of a leſs ſize than thoſe of Khoraſan, and have not the large ponderous tail which is peculiar to this animal, in the countries lying between the Indus and the eaſtern confines of Mazanderan; neither is their fleſh ſo fat or well taſted.

On the 26th, at Sari, three furſungs, a fortified town and the reſidence of Aga Mahomed Khan, the chief of Mazanderan, Aſterabad, and ſome diſtricts ſituate in Khoraſan. The country in this day's journey was flat and woody, interſperſed with ſmall ſtreams, and bounded to the north-eaſt and ſouth-weſt by a low range of hills. The kafilah having halted about two miles to the ſouthward of Sari, the ſeid and I walked into the town, which we found had grievouſly ſuffered by the effects of a late fire. We were ſtopped at the gate-guard, which was under the charge of an Abyſſinian ſlave,* who after making the common enquiries permitted us to paſs. The market of Sari is plentifully ſupplied with proviſions, among

* A native of this quarter of Africa, is denominated Hubſhi, among the Mahometans, and is held in high eſtimation in Aſia, for a ſuppoſed characteriſtic fidelity to the ſervice in which he is employed. Abyſſinians are frequently ſeen about the perſons of princes, where they hold ſtations of confidence. And at the Porte, as eunuchs, they are entruſted with the whole interior management of the imperial haram; the females of this tribe, though deficient in thoſe external charms, which are ſo eagerly ſought after by the Mahometans, and which indeed diffuſe pleaſure among all the ſons of men, are alſo greatly prized for many domeſtic virtues, and eſpecially for their chaſtity.

which

which is ſeen the grey mullet, a fiſh abounding in all the rivers which fall into the ſouthern ſhore of the Caſpian ſea.

SARI is rather a ſmall town, but crouded with inhabitants, many of whom are merchants of credit, who reſort thither for the purpoſe of ſupplying the chief and his officers with articles of foreign produce. A ſociety of Armenians is eſtabliſhed in the vicinity of the town, where they exerciſe a various traffic and manufacture a ſpirit diſtilled from grapes, of which Aga Mahomed drinks freely, though this habit does not ſeem to operate to the prejudice of the people. This chief has the reputation of being attentive to buſineſs, and of poſſeſſing an extenſive capacity, which is indeed obvious to common notice, throughout all parts of his government. The walls of the town are kept in good condition, and the ditch though narrow is deep, and ſufficiently tenable againſt any force now exiſting in this country.

A PALACE has been lately built at Sari, of contemptible mean ſtructure, though of limited ſize, and has a more compact appearance than any building which I have ſeen in Perſia. The front is occupied by a ſmall eſplanade, on which are mounted three pieces of cannon, with carriages of good workmanſhip fixed on three wheels. Aga Mahomed, a Perſian, of the Kajar tribe,* is about fifty

* A word in the provincial language of Mazanderan, ſignifying a rebel or a deſerter, and the name of an extenſive tribe, chiefly reſiding in Mazanderan and Aſterabad.

Like

fifty years of age, and the ſon of Mumtaz Khan,* who in the diſtractions which involved Perſia, ſubſequent to the death of Nadir Shah, ſtood forth among the various competitors for the throne, and was for a ſhort period, declared head of the empire by a large party of the people. But he was ultimately compelled to yield to the ſuperior force of Kareem Khan, by whom he was put to death. The family of Mumtaz Khan, falling alſo into the hands of the conqueror, he deprived Aga Mahomed, the eldeſt ſon of virility. I am not enabled to give you any ſatisfactory information of the events which promoted the enlargement of this chief, and in quick gradation inveſted him with the poſſeſſion of an extenſive territory.

In a country where the evolutions and caprice of fortune are exhibited in infinite multiplicity, and her wheel whirls with a velocity that confounds obſervation, where the ſlave of the morning is often ſeen at noon exalted on the ruins of his maſter, it becomes a perplexed diſguiſing taſk, to trace the ſteps which lead to honors and power; nor does it adequately reward the enquiry of reaſon. Such tranſitions may be ſummarily aſcribed to the general depravity of a people, who unreſtrained by laws, or even

Like the Rajahpoots of India, the Kajars are uſually devoted to the profeſſion of arms, and they compoſe the largeſt portion of the ſoldiery of theſe provinces. They are mentioned by Mr. Hanway in his relation of his tranſactions at Aſterabad.

* He was alſo called Fuſtah Ali Khan.

the

the habits of juſtice, give a looſe to every impulſe, which promiſes the gratification of ambition, avarice or revenge.

AGA Mahomed has become, ſince the death of Kareem Khan, the moſt powerful chief of Perſia. He has many brothers, one of whom, Jaffier Kooly, governs Balfroſh, the principal town of Mazanderan; but his conduct is narrowly watched and his authority ſo limited, that he cannot iſſue a paſſport to a Ruſſian trading veſſel without the aſſent of Aga Mahomed. The forces of this chief, on occaſions of ſervice, may amount to fifteen thouſand cavalry, which were embodied in the courſe of the laſt year, when he overun Ghilan, and plundered Reſhd, the reſidence of Hydeat Khan, the ruler of the province, who, with his family and treaſure, ſought refuge in the Ruſſian factory of Enzillee* until the Mazanderan troops had evacuated the country.

IT appears that Aga Mahomed is preparing another attack, which is thought will ſpeedily be effected, unleſs he is deterred by the power of the Ruſſians, who having long derived extenſive advantages from the commerce of Ghilan, ſeem diſpoſed to eſpouſe its cauſe. Aga Mahomed is at this time, the only Perſian chief bordering on the Caſpian ſea, whom the empire of Ruſſia has yet made tributary, or rendered ſubſervient to its policy.

* Situate near the border of the Caſpian ſea, about ſix miles to the northward of Reſhd.

ABOUT

About a year ago a small Ruſſian ſquadron arriving at Aſtroff, a capacious bay on the Aſterabad ſhore, the commanding officer directed a large building to be conſtructed near the ſhore, for the purpoſe of accommodating his crew, and probably to lay the baſis of ſome future plan. When the building was nearly finiſhed, Aga Mahomed, to whom this procedure had given alarm, invited the commodore, an inexperienced young man, with his officers, to an entertainment given at Aſterabad, on the celebration of ſome Mahometan feſtival. Many of the Ruſſians with their officer went to the Perſian feaſt, where they were ſuddenly ſeized and put into confinement. Aga Mahomed then affected to expreſs much reſentment at the conduct of the Ruſſians, in having erected without permiſſion, ſo large and ſolid a building in his country. It was in vain that the Ruſſian expatiated on the treachery of the act, and ſo glaring a violation of hoſpitality. He was reſolutely anſwered, that unleſs his men were directed to demoliſh the building, the party ſhould be detained in priſon, and perhaps meet with a worſe fate.

The commodore dreading the effects of this threat, diſpatched the neceſſary orders to the ſquadron; and when the work was performed, he and his companions were releaſed. The officer was ſoon after diſmiſſed from the command of the Caſpian ſquadron, and baniſhed from the court. The empreſs ſeverely cenſured his breach of military conduct, which, on account of youth, and a regard for his family, ſhe obſerved had not been noticed with the

deſerved puniſhment. Aga Mahomed lately received an addreſs from the Ruſſian government, threatening him, it is ſaid, with a ſevere vengeance for the inſult offered to their flag, unleſs he made a ſpeedy atonement. But it does not ſeem that this chief is diſpoſed to ſhew any reſpect to the requiſition; and if credit is to be given to a general rumour, another deſcent on Ghilan may be ſoon expected, the probability of which is corroborated by a prohibition of all intercourſe with the inhabitants of that province.

On the 27th, we left Sari, and proceeding five farſungs, through a country interſperſed with plain and foreſt, halted on the ſkirt of a wood near the high road. At half the diſtance of this day's journey, croſſed a fordable ſtream, which runs to the left or north-weſt, and falls into the Mazanderan river. The carriers were ſtopped at the paſſage, and ordered to convey on their horſes a quantity of ſtones, and place them in certain ſwampy parts of the great road, leading from Sari to Balfroſh; which, it is ſaid, was firſt conſtructed by Shah Abbas, and appears to have been cut through a foreſt.

At three miles to the ſouthward of our laſt night's halting place, we paſſed through the ſmall village of Alhabad, which has a daily market well ſupplied with bread, cheeſe, and ſuch proviſions as are adapted to the refreſhment of travellers, for the uſe of whom it ſeems to have been wholly eſtabliſhed.

On the 29th of January, our party arrived at Balfroſh, four and a half farſungs. The road this day was the worſt I ever had

had travelled on, and required, in the winter season, continued labour to make it passable. Though deep ditches are extended on each side and drains cut across, to carry off the extraordinary moisture of the soil, we proceeded with much difficulty and hazard. The carriers at certain stations, were required to deliver their respective portions of stones, and the defaulters, among whom I was classed, were detained by the officers of government; here I might have incurred a long delay, had not the Ghulan seid interposed his good offices for me as a pilgrim and his friend. It was then soon seen in what a favourable light we were beheld. Our hands were even kissed in token of reverence. The proprietor of my horse having no religious virtues to plead, and his quantity of stones being found very insufficient, he was not permitted to pass; and while he with many others were endeavouring to qualify the demand, the seid and I agreed to proceed to Balfrosh, that we might be sheltered against the weather, which this day had set in with drifts of small rain and a severe cold.

In high anticipation of the pleasures in store for us at the capital, we were overtaken by the carrier, who foaming with rage, at this my second desertion, as he termed it, accused me of an attempt to steal his mare. Nor was his passion allayed, until I promised him a large dish of pillaw, to be ready on his arrival in Balfrosh.

At the distance of two miles on the south side of the town, is seen a small island in the river, where Shah Abbas erected a

palace, whose roof with the bridge of communication, has lately been applied by the governor of Balfrosh to some domestic purposes. After paying double the stipulated hire, and the fine in pillaw, I discharged the carrier who, like all those of his profession within my knowledge, was an arrant knave. But knavery constitutes a grand branch of his profession, and does not heavily affect the purse of the traveller, who if he wishes to journey on with comfort, and have his name puffed, should heartily feed his carrier, and as the common nature of man requires indulgence, occasionally wink at his roguery. Not to govern too much has been a maxim of long standing in the policy of nations, nor is it less necessary to the welfare and quiet of domestic œconomy.

At Balfrosh I was informed that three Russian vessels were lying in the road of Muschid Sir, and would sail in a few days to Baku.* It now behoved me to act warily, and to wind up with discretion an adventure which had hitherto been successful, and had at this place reached a crisis, which must either produce a happy, or a dangerous issue. To this period I had assumed, with good fortune, the Mahometan character, without which, the journey I think could not have been performed, especially from Turshish to the Caspian sea. I had been admitted, without reserve, into the society of Mahometans, and had lived at

* A port on the western coast of the Caspian sea.

the

the same board with the most zealous and scrupulous, some of whom, being now on the spot, would, on a discovery of my person, inveterately resent the deceit. It was first expedient to quiet the mind of the kid, who lodging in the same apartment, must necessarily become acquainted with my departure. Telling him that I was going to make a pilgrimage at a tomb,* much resorted to by the Persians, in the vicinity of Muschid Sir, and leaving a few things which would be useful, I bade him adieu with an air of nonchalance, yet breathing a silent, fervent wish, that this old man, whom I was never to see again, might experience every good in the dispensation of providence.

Musing on the scenes which of late had been thrived with a rapid diversity, and on the singular, yet interesting connections which I had formed in the course of my journey, I travelled on to Muschid Sir; a scattered village, situate on the eastern bank of the Mazanderan river, about ten miles distant from Balfrosh, and two from the Caspian sea. On seeing the Russian quarter, I sent back a horse which I had hired, and presented myself to a person who was pointed out to me as the master of a Russian vessel; but he did not understand any language that I spoke. To obviate this embarrassment, an interpreter was called in, and being informed that he was a Russian,

* The place of interment of a son of Mooza Kazim, one of the twelve Imams of the Persians.

dian, I related my story without reserve; that I was an English gentleman, who from motives of curiosity and pleasure, had travelled from Bengal, through the northern parts of India and Persia, and that I now intended to proceed by the way of Russia to England.

The linguist expressed surprize at the relation, which he seemed to doubt; but a repetition, accompanied with that confidence which only arises from truth, noticing also that I was enabled to reward any good office, gave my relation credit, at least with the Russian. The master agreed to convey me to Baku, whither his vessel was consigned; and observed, that the commanding officer of a frigate lying at that port, would give the necessary directions for my future procedure. The matter being thus happily arranged, I was invited to partake of a mess of fish-broth, served up in a large wooden bowl; of which the master, six or seven sailors, and myself, made a hearty meal; to me it was a regale; both from its being really a savory one, and from the manner of participation, to which I had been long a stranger.

The Russian habitations at Mushid Sir, are rudely constructed, and far from being clean. The sides are about five feet high, and composed of branches of trees, twisted between stakes, stuck at small distances in the ground; and the roof is of thatched straw. The furniture, equally simple and coarse, consists of some narrow wooden beds, a long board, raised in the centre to eat at, and a few stools, or buckets inverted to sit on. But the practice of living

long band, in all its variations, from eating raw barley bread to sleeping on snow, and formed me into a complete veteran, so that the Russian cabin, with its assemblage of rough utensils, was to my sight a gratified band. And the knife, wooden spoon, and platter, luxuries of a superior order.

In the first days of my residence at this place, I forcibly experienced a refreshment of mind and body. I had been accustomed to rise in the morning before day-break, with my hands and feet generally benumbed with cold, when after packing my baggage, I was obliged to take a part in the business of the camel-driver or the carrier; nor did the end of the day's journey often bring with it more than the rarest accommodation, or afford me much matter of intellectual gratification. But these inconveniences were all done away, and my meals as my sleep, became salutary and regular. Being thus relieved from labour, anxiety, and the incessant talk of supporting a feigned character, I thought myself happy, and as happiness largely arises from comparison and the excursions of fancy, to which I now gave an ample scope, this was perhaps the most pleasurable period of my life.

The Caspian sea presented a grand scene, and its waves dashing against the shore produced with a delightful sound, the exulting retrospect of dangers passed, yet I endeavoured to check this rising folly of presumption, ill suited to the nature of man, by considering that the accomplishment of my journey was greatly promoted by a train of events, in which my own exertions had

but

but a trivial share. Common tradition, and certain ideas which are arbitrarily located in the minds of most men, had figured to me a Russian, tall, robust, of a fierce aspect, of barbarous manners, and uncouth deportment. In short, truth obliges me to say that I had ever assimilated the idea of an urse major with a native of Russia, and it would have been equally difficult to have separated these figures in my mind, as meagerness from a Frenchman, or corpulence from a Hollander. But I must crave pardon of the Russian nation at large, for this and other erroneous opinions which I had formed of it.

In the first instance, I saw that the Russians were evidently of lower stature, than most of the northern people of Europe, and generally had the thick form of a Tartar, with his broad visage. Those who are not in the service of government, encourage the growth of the beard; they wear a long outer vest, which is fastened round the middle with a girdle; their shirt, like that of the Mahometans, hangs over the breeches, which are short, and they usually wear boots. Their hair falls loosely down the neck, and they cover the head, when abroad, with a cap or bonnet, which is taken off in the house, and in the interchange of courtesy. They possess an address and suavity of manners, even in ordinary life, which would not disgrace men of a much higher class, among nations deemed the most polite. The entrance of a Russian into a room at first surprized me; for, instead of noticing any person in it, he uncovers his head, and with an air of humble reverence,

offers up a prayer to the picture of the virgin and an infant Jesus, which is exhibited in the most conspicuous part of every apartment. Having performed this ceremony he salutes the company, and at departure he observes the like usage. I am by no means empowered to ascertain the virtual opinions which the Russians entertain of their national religion, or to what extent they may operate in a moral tendency; but I can with confidence say, that their exterior observance of religious duties is accompanied with a reverential attention, and is void of that fanatic mummery which has thrown a ridicule on many parts of the Romish worship.

I had not long been a member of the Russian society, when Hadji Mahomed appeared at Musehid Sir. On perceiving him, I was impressed with an involuntary dread, and had my creed admitted the tenet, I should have seen in Hadji Mahomed my evil genius. Retiring to the house I waited with anxiety for the issue of his operations, which I knew would be hostile to my welfare; when, after some little time the master of the vessel coming in, informed me that the hadji had made many enquiries about my situation, and spoke of me in terms of regard. The Russian expressed much surprize at hearing me lament this intelligence, which he said ought to give me pleasure, as Hadji Mahomed was a person of eminent note at Mazanderan, and might assist me in procuring a passport, without which I now learned no person could leave the province. A storm now began to

threaten me from all quarters; the perſon who had been my firſt interpreter, was not as he ſaid, a native of Ruſſia, but an Armenian; and with a treachery not uncommon to his tribe, had circulated among the Perſians of Muſchid Sir, the information he had been entruſted with, embelliſhed with many fabrications of his own; as that I poſſeſſed much wealth in money and jewels, and that I was a ſpy. This ſtory obtained a general credit with the Mahometans, eſpecially with Hadji Mahomed, who began to contrive plans of deriving an advantage from my troubles. The maſter of the veſſel ſeeing the popular cry ſtrong againſt me, became fearful of giving me ſhelter; for it is neceſſary to mention, that the Ruſſian traders, chiefly a low claſs of people, are expoſed in all parts of the government of Aga Mahomed to ſevere oppreſſions and inſult, but which an advantageous traffick has induced them to overlook. And Aga Mahomed knowing the cauſe of their forbearance, preſerves no decency in his conduct to them.

The Ruſſian now acquainted me, with manifeſt ſymptoms of fear, that were he to receive me without a paſſport, his veſſel and cargoe would be confiſcated. The principal freighter of the bark, Abbas Ali, a native of Baku, had ſhewn me from my firſt arrival at Muſchid Sir, much kindneſs, and ſeemed deſirous of relieving my embarraſſment. He expreſſed a ſorrow at the ſerious difficulty in which I was involved, rendered, he ſaid, the more perplexing by the ill deſigns of the maſter of the veſſel,

who

who was a perſon of a bad character; but be of good comfort, continued he, "for I will be your friend, and do not on any pretence entruſt your property to the Ruſſian." This advice came in convenient ſeaſon, and teſtified that Abbas Ali knew this man; for on the following day he addreſſed me in a long harangue, ſetting forth that the Perſians had received intelligence of my poſſeſſing a valuable amount in ſpecie and jewels; that my own knowledge of theſe people would naturally point out the inſecure ſtate of both my perſon and effects, and that an earneſt regard to my welfare, had induced him to requeſt that my property might be depoſited in his charge, until the departure of the veſſel. But the counſel of Abbas Ali, not a little ſtrengthened by the preſent propoſal, determined me to be the keeper of my own cash.

EITHER the reſentment of a ſuppoſed want of confidence in him, or the diſappointment of ſome ſiniſter purpoſe, gave the Ruſſian a ſenſible chagrin; and from that time he continued to treat me with rudeneſs and neglect. That I might retire from the view of the people at Muſchid Sir, who were now in the habit of accumulating unfavourable conjectures of me, I deſired to go on board the veſſel, and remain there until ſome method might be adopted to leave the country with permiſſion; and the maſter having conſented, though with much reluctance, to my embarkation, I departed ſecretely and without any impediment. From the Ruſſian quarter the diſtance is about a mile and a

half to the mouth of the river, where the force of the sea has raised a long and shallow bar, navigable only by boats and small light vessels; but when the wind blows strong from the north, the passage is wholly impracticable.

The bark lay a league from the shore in six or seven fathoms water, and was about the burthen of one hundred tons, with two masts; the largest, fixed in the centre, is of one piece and rigged with a standing mainsail, extended at the upper end by a long gaff, and at the foot with a sheet, a tonsail, and an occasional topgallantsail; this last is furled before it is hoisted with slight ropes, which are broken when the sail is aloft by a pressure on the lower ropes; the fore part of the vessel is furnished with a slanting foresail, a bowsprit and jib; and on the poop stands a small mast, which carries a mizensail. The clumsy form and construction of the barks which navigate the Caspian sea, shew that little improvement has been made on them since the time of Peter the Great, who first introduced the art of ship-building into Russia. Having straight sides with a large and ponderous kitchen on the deck, these vessels sail slowly, and only with a free wind. As they lye much in open roads, the Caspian being scantily supplied with harbours, they are furnished with stout anchors and cables, apparently of a larger size than is necessary, though there is often found full occasion for such aids to withstand the furious gales of wind and high breaking waves, which prevail in this sea.

NOW

I now learned that the Ruſſian whom I have hitherto termed the maſter, was not a mariner, but an agent * who is appointed to manage the commercial buſineſs of the veſſel and diſburſe the ſailing charges. The crew conſiſted of a maſter, † termed boats-man, his mate, five mariners, and a cook; who from their pay and ſmall trading privilege provide their own diet. The Ruſſian Captain among whom I was known by the name of Gregoire, from its near reſemblance to George, treated me with a cordial hoſpitality; nor muſt you imagine that I was demeaned by an unreſerved aſſociation with theſe men, whoſe habits and mode of life admitted of no diſcrimination of rank. I ſat down at their board without ſcruple, indeed with thankfulneſs, and they never omitted to preſent me with the higheſt ſtool, the beſt ſpoon, and with wheaten-bread, while they themſelves eat that of rye.

Some tea and ſugar ‡ purchaſed from an Armenian, enabled me to breakfaſt alone in the cabin, which I occupied with the boatſman, who ſhewed a ready attention to all my little wants, and became as agreeable a companion, as the want of language would admit. Our common fare on board the veſſel,

* Called in the Ruſſian language, Precauſce, a diſpenſer of orders.

† Many of the nautical parales and implements in uſe, among the Ruſſians have been adopted from the Dutch, from whom Peter the Great learned the art of ſhip-building.

‡ This ſugar the produce of the Weſt Indies, and manufactured in England, was imported at Archangel, whence it came into Perſia, by the trade of Aſtracan.

conſiſted

conſiſted of a large ſpecies of fiſh, in Ruſſia called the Beluka,* which was either prepared in a ſoup or minced with a large quantity of ſalt and pepper, and boiled in a cover of paſte; this diſh I often thought an Engliſh ſailor would have called in his deſcriptive language, a ſhark dumplin. Nor was it inferior in ſolidity, to any fabrication of the dumplin kind; after the fiſh came thick pancakes, fried in a deluge of butter. I had laid in a ſtock of mullet, a more wholeſome food than the beluka; but ſeeing that from a fear of being chargeable to me, my meſſmates refuſed to partake of it, I laid aſide this with every other diſtinction, and except the tea, fared as they did.

It now appeared that obſtinate difficulties were thrown in the way by the cuſtom-maſter at Muſchid Sir, who filled his office with equal vigilance and rapacity. Seeing me from the unfavorable predicament in which I ſtood, a profitable game, he directed that I ſhould be immediately ſent on ſhore, there to be detained, until the chief's pleaſure ſhould be known. As this man only wanted ſome of my money, and would have been diſappointed by my formal departure from the country, I made him, through the medium of Abbas Ali, the Baku merchant, a ſubſtantial offer, but delayed the payment till the time of paſſing, that no ſecondary demand might be preferred.

Two

* It is taken with a hook near the mouths of moſt of the rivers, which fall into the Caſpian; its length is generally from ſix to eight feet, ſometimes it is ſeen of eighteen

Two days previously to our departure, Ali Abbas came on board of the veſſel, and repreſented that the cuſtom-maſter was inexorable to every ſolicitation, urging that Aga Mahomed was at this juncture averſe from permitting any perſon to leave the province, and that were he acceſſary to my eſcape, his head on the diſcovery, would pay the forfeit. Knowing that an interdiction had been laid on all inland paſſengers, and that the diſpatch of the Ruſſian had been withheld for the ſpace of twenty days, to accompliſh ſome purpoſe of government, I was aware that a certain riſque was incurred by the Perſian, whom I propoſed to indemnify by a proper compenſation; but I alſo obſerved that if he perſiſted in the refuſal of all private negociation, I would myſelf proceed to Sari, and relate my ſtory to the chief, and he well knew that no benefit would accrue to him from the deciſion of his maſter. This argument was completely efficient, and when reinforced by ſome of my Hindoſtan gold, permiſſion was given me to purſue whatever way I liked, except that of Sari.

Before I leave this quarter of Perſia, I will lay before you a brief account of its geography, with curſory obſervations on its former and preſent commerce, and its relative policy with Ruſſia. Mazanderan which occupies the centre of the ſouthern ſhore of the Caſpian ſea, has Aſterabad on the eaſt, Ghilan on the weſt, and to the northward it is bounded by the

eighteen feet, and has the head and form of a ſhark. This fiſh is not eaten by the Mahometans, who hold it unclean, from having no ſcales.

moun-

mountainous tract of foreſt which has been already noticed. Though the fort of Sari, from its ſtrength and centrical ſituation has become the reſidence of the chief, Balfroſh is conſidered the capital of this province.

This town occupies an irregular oblong ſpace, of about a mile and a half in circumference, and ſtanding on a low moiſt ground, its ſtreets are at this ſeaſon of the year choaked with mud. The houſes are coarſely built of brick or clay, with a flat roof, and being generally ſmall have a mean appearance. The karavanſeras of which there are four, have little of that neatneſs and convenience, which is ſeen in thoſe of upper Perſia, and are of a much leſs ſize; but the market-place, which in the manner of Aſiatic towns, forms the principal ſtreet, denotes an active traffick.

The rice of Mazanderan is of an excellent quality, and compoſes the uſual food of the people, who find it difficult in their marſhy lands, to cultivate a ſufficient quantity of wheat for common conſumption, and that produced is of a coarſe ſort. The bread uſed by the higher claſſes of inhabitants, is made of the flour of Shirwan, a conſiderable amount of which is annually imported at Muſchid Sir. This deficiency is in ſome degree compenſated to Mazanderan by the growth of ſugar, which though of an inferior kind, is adequate to moſt of its common uſes. When the general demand of this article in Perſia is conſidered and that it is rarely produced on this ſide of the Indus, it might

be

be naturally ſuppoſed that Mazanderan would derive extenſive benefits from ſuch a poſſeſſion; eſpecially through its navigable vicinity to the ſouthern territories of Ruſſia, where a large quantity is conſumed, at an advanced price; yet from an ignorance in the methods of preparing and refining it, this valuable product yields but a limited utility.

An inhabitant of Aſtracan, I am informed, came into this province for the purpoſe of eſtabliſhing a manufactory of ſugar, but failing in his project, no future experiment has been made. Were the Ruſſians ſkilled in the proceſs, they would be enabled, by the importation of raw ſugars, to fix in their country an important and lucrative commerce. Mazanderan alſo produces a ſmall quantity of ſilk, which is fabricated by a ſociety of Jews; but its principal trade is maintained by a frequent intercourſe with the port of Baku, which receives white and coloured calicoes, cotton, and rice, and returns bar iron of Ruſſia, ſaffron, flour, and remnants of broad cloth procured from Aſtracan. The commerce of this quarter, which now does not employ more than four or five barks, might be largely extended, did a greater harmony exiſt between Aga Mahomed and the Ruſſians; eſpecially were the manufacture of ſugar increaſed.

The Perſians have long attempted to navigate the Caſpian ſea, though with little ſucceſs; their veſſels are open, rudely conſtructed, and ill managed, ſeldom leaving the coaſt but in the ſeaſon of fair weather; many of them are fitted out at Farabad, an

ordinary town, ſituate at the mouth of a river, thirty miles to the eaſtward of Muſchid Sir, and now ſupported by a ſmall trade in rice, ſalt, fiſh, and pottery ware. This town in the European topography of Mazanderan, bears the appearance of note, and gives its name to a province; whatever might have been the former importance of Farabad, and it is noticed with reſpect in Perſian hiſtory, little teſtimony of it now exiſts.

The province of Aſterabad, lying on the the eaſt ſide of the ſouthern Caſpian ſhore, affords little produce for a foreign trade; and it enjoys a refreſhing temperate air, and is beautifully interſperſed with hill and dale, and abundantly ſupplied with ſtreams of ſalubrious water.

Shah Abbas, the moſt powerful prince of the Suffuee race, pleaſed with the climate of this province, erected a palace near the ſhore of the bay of Aſhroff,* whither he uſed often to retire to avoid the heats of Iſpahan.† Almoſt the only marine export of this province conſiſts of dried mullets, which are cured intire by ſmoke, and are held in ſuch eſtimation by the Ruſſians, that two cargoes of them are annually imported at Aſtracan.

Ghilan the richeſt of the provinces bordering on the Caſpian ſea, extends in a weſtern parallel from Mazanderan; it is bounded on the weſt by the territories of Taliſh and Aſtara; and on the

* This is the only harbour, on the ſouthern ſide of the Caſpian ſea.

† This prince removed the capital of Perſia from Caſbin to Iſpahan.

ſouth

ſouth by a range of lofty mountains, which divide it from the dependencies of Caſhan and Caſbin.

HYDEAT KHAN, the Ghilan chief, has relinquiſhed Reſhd, his former reſidence, and for the ſecurity of his wealth and family againſt the incurſions from Mazanderan, has retired to the vicinity of Enzille, where the Ruſſians poſſeſs a fortified factory, garriſoned by a company of ſoldiers, and ſupplied with a few pieces of cannon.*

"HYDEAT KHAN is ſuppoſed to poſſeſs a revenue of two hundred thouſand pounds, a great part of which ariſes from the produce of ſilk; and from this revenue, he has amaſſed, it is ſaid, a conſiderable treaſure. Here you muſt be cautioned againſt computing Perſian money by your ſtandard, for in this country, where every commodity is procured at a cheap rate, ſpecie may fairly be reckoned at double the value which it bears in England.

HYDEAT KHAN is about ſixty years of age, and according to the information of the Ghilan ſeid, of whom frequent mention has been made, is rapacious, tyrannical, and puſillanimous. Conſcious of his inability to reſiſt the force of Aga Mahomed Khan, he has wholly thrown himſelf on the protection of the

* The moſt accurate account of Ghilan, is found in the travels of the late Jonas Hanway, a name widely known in the annals of humanity, and deeply graven on the the moſt diſtinguiſhed monuments of his country. Some uſeful remarks on Ghilan are alſo to be collected from a book, entitled; voyages and travels through the Ruſſian empire, Perſia, &c. by William Cook, M. D.

court of Peterſburgh, from which it may be ſaid, that he derives the exiſtence of his power, and the ſafety of his perſon. Nor will the Ruſſians, while they enjoy ſuch important benefits from Ghilan, fail to give him ſupport.

The ſilks of Ghilan are exported to Aſtracan, chiefly through the medium of Armenian merchants, ſubjects of Ruſſia, who poſſeſs the larger ſhare of the Caſpian commerce. It was long believed that the ſilk brought into Europe from Turkey, was all produced in the Ottoman empire: but ſince a more converſant knowledge of Perſia has been obtained, it appears that the Turkiſh merchants were uſed to reſort to the provinces of Ghilan and Shirwan,* whence they tranſported large quantities of this commodity to the European factories of the Levant.

The Perſian ſilk trade continued to flow in this channel, until the year 1739, when the Ruſſia Company of England having procured the ſanction of Parliament,† ſent their factors into Ghilan to eſtabliſh a commerce, which ſhould have for its object the purchaſe of ſilk, and the vent of Engliſh manufactures. They received a cordial encouragement from Reza Kouli, who at that period, governed Perſia in the abſence of his father, then

* Situate on the weſt ſide of the Caſpian ſea, where there is abundant growth of ſilk, but of a coarſer kind, than that of Ghilan, which is eſteemed the fineſt in Perſia.

† They were vigorouſly oppoſed in England by the Levant Company, who aware of the injury which they would ſuſtain by the Caſpian trade, repreſented to Parliament that their charter, an excluſive one, would be violently infringed by ſuch permiſſion being granted to the Ruſſia merchants.

engaged

engaged in the Indian expedition; and they remained in Ghilan until the year 1748, when the general tumult and devaſtation, which followed the death of Nadir, compelled them to retire and abandon an extenſive amount of property.

It is ſeen that previouſly to the diſſolution of the factory at Ghilan, the court of Peterſburgh began to entertain jealouſies of the Engliſh eſtabliſhment in Perſia, and from their own growing knowledge of commerce and navigation, became deſirous of poſſeſſing a trade which naturally pertained to their country. The government of Perſia had largely contributed to increaſe this jealouſy, by a diſtinguiſhed encouragement to all Engliſh adventurers, whom it ſaw independent of Ruſſia, its conſtitutional enemy, and capable alſo of enriching the kingdom, by their ſuperior ſkill and ſpirit in trade; but above all, Perſia was deſirous of employing the Engliſh in the conſtruction of veſſels of war; that it might acquire the dominion of the Caſpian ſea.

The firſt cauſe of the diſpleaſure and alarm, of the court of Peterſburgh, at the proceedings of the Engliſh factory in Ghilan, aroſe from the conduct of the principal agent, John Elton,* who, on a diſagreement with his aſſociates, entered into the ſervice of Nadir Shah, by whom he was inveſted with certain territories bordering on the Caſpian ſea, and created the commander of a

* See Hanway's Travels, for a relation of ſome part of the Adventures of this enterprizing perſon.

ſquadron,

ſquadron, with which he himſelf, with infinite ability and labor; had furniſhed the Perſian government.

On the 14th of March, our veſſel, filled up to the hatches, the decks alſo ſtrewed over with bales and paſſengers, got under way, but a foul wind ſoon ſetting in, we came to an anchor. From the manner in which theſe veſſels are navigated, laden, and altogether managed, I ſhould be ſurprized if ſhipwrecks were not frequent in this ſea. The cabin was ſtuffed ſo full of parcels and baggage, that thoſe to whom it was allotted, were obliged to crawl in, and then they found only a ſcanty length and breadth, ſleeping or awake: the paſſengers I perceived were all petty traders, who having embarked a certain property on the veſſel, accompanied it in perſon; for there is not a ſufficient credit or good faith eſtabliſhed in Perſia, to enable merchants to conſign their effects to factors. The foreign trader therefore is neceſſitated to become a ſupercargoe, an occupation which for the firſt time, I ſaw in the letter of the word, verified by the adventurers ſitting immediately upon their wares, whence they ſtirred but ſeldom, and were never long abſent: of theſe people I numbered not leſs than ſeventy, who were ſpread over the deck, or packed in the cabin and boat; It was ſoon ſeen that the maſter and mariners were equally ignorant of their profeſſion; he could ſcarcely diſcriminate the points of the compaſs or throw the lead; and the men, though expert at the uſe of the tailor's needle, and the implements of cookery, would among the moſt clumſy of our ſailors, have been termed landſmen.

When

When I beheld this ill-conſtructed bark lumbered with goods and paſſengers, and its unſkilful crew, I could not but entertain apprehenſions of our ſafety, eſpecially in a ſea ſo tempeſtuous as the Caſpian.

On the 17th, we got under ſail, and aſſiſted by a favorable wind, we anchored on the 22d, about ten leagues to the northward of the port of Baku; and on the 24th, reached the entrance of the harbour, when the wind which had been blowing ſtrong from the eaſtward, ſuddenly changed, and came from the land with extreme violence; but the vicinity of the ſhore kept the ſea down, and probably prevented our deſtruction. The Ruſſians, truſting to the ſtrength of their anchors and cables, which were of the moſt ſubſtantial kind, went to ſleep; nor did they once endeavour to prepare the veſſel for the ſea, in the event of its parting from the anchors, or uſe any means of aſſiſting the cable which was ſeverely ſtrained; ſome of the more animated of them would occaſionally open their eyes, and call out on God's mercy to ſhelter them from the fury of the ſtorm. It abated on the 26th, when we entered the port of Baku, and ſaluted a Ruſſian frigate, lying there, with all the ſwivels and muſquets on board, without regard of order or count. The agent of our veſſel attended the commanding officer, and in his report mentioned the ſtory of his European paſſenger. It is to be noticed that the Turks and Perſians, make a difference between a Ruſſian and a native of Europe, calling the one a Feringhee, and the other

a Rooſs.

a Rooſs. In this diſtinction is alſo included a ſuperior eſtimation of the Europeans to whom they aſcribe a more extenſive genius and knowledge; and what I thought extraordinary, the like nominal difference is entertained by all the lower claſs of ſouthern Ruſſians.

On board of the frigate, whither I was ſummoned, I related the motives and general track of my journey, and was received with a warmth of hoſpitality, to which neither my appearance; being clad in a very ordinary dreſs, or my unſupported repreſentation had a claim. I now became informed of the general peace in Europe; and it was with a deep felt mortification, I learned from a foreigner, the entire ſeparation of the American Colonies and their numerous people. The frigate was to ſail the next day to Enzillee, to be ſtationed in that quarter, for the protection of the province of Ghilan, the chief of which had ſometime before diſpatched an envoy to the Ruſſian camp, in Crim Tartary,* to repreſent his dread of Aga Mahomed, and to ſolicit the aid of the Ruſſians. The agent had returned, and was accompanied by a Ruſſian officer, who had traveled from the camp to Baku in twenty days. Part of the journey lay through the country of the Leſgui Tartars, who are a ſavage people and proverbially hoſtile to ſtrangers; But from a dread of the Ruſſian troops, now advanced

* Then commanded by general Potemkin, who was inveſted with the government of the Crim and the power of controlling the affairs of Aſtracan,

to

to their frontier, they had permitted this party to paſs unmoleſted. The officer who ſpoke the Turkiſh language fluently, ſeemed to be an ingenious active man, and well fitted for a ſervice of enterprize.

THE Ghilan envoy, then proceeding on the frigate, expreſſed a ſurprize to ſee me, whom he thought a Mahometan, eating at the ſame board with the Ruſſian gentlemen; but when he ſaw a barber commencing an operation on my beard, which I took the opportunity of having ſhaved, he evinced great amazement and indignation; nor did he, until repeatedly informed of my real character, ceaſe his reprehenſion of the act; during the proceſs of which, he threw on me many a look of contempt; when the barber began to cut off the muſtachios, he ſeveral times in a peremptory manner required him to deſiſt, and ſeeing them gone, now ſaid he, of whatever country or ſect you may be, your diſgrace is complete, and you look like a woman.

THUS after a growth of fifteen months, fell my beard, which in that period had increaſed to a great magnitude, both in length and breadth; though it had been ſomewhat ſhrivelled by the ſeverity of the late winter; when you advert to the general importance of an Aſiatic beard, to the eſſential ſervices which mine had rendered, and to our long and intimate aſſociation, I truſt that this brief introduction of it to your notice will not be deemed impertinent. This operation of cutting it, ought however to have been poſtponed till my arival at Aſtracan; for my European face with an Aſiatic dreſs, made me an object of general remark and enquiry

among the Perſians; nor did I eſcape the cenſure of the Armenians who are taught to eſteem the beard a badge of reſpect, and even ſanctity, recommended to their example by the patriarchs and primitive Chriſtians, and when they conform in European countries to the cuſtom of ſhaving it, they are ridiculed by all the ſtauncher brethren of their tribe.

On the 27th, I went on board the frigate, then getting under way, and ſaw the ſeamen execute their work in an active, ſkilful manner. They hove up the anchor, and ſet ſail with an expertneſs, which would not have diſcredited the crew of an Engliſh ſhip of war. The captain procured me a paſſage from a Greek merchant, who had come to take leave of him, and gave me a paſſport requiring my admiſſion into the town of Baku, and that no moleſtation ſhould be offered me by the Perſian government; and the ſecond lieutenant of the frigate, who had been my interpreter and had taken a willing part in adjuſting my little wants, gave me a letter of introduction to an officer of the Ruſſian navy, whoſe name was Ivan Andreits.* The Greek carried me to his apartment in a karavanſera, which is excluſively appropriated to the uſe of Chriſtians and Sconi Mahometans.

Ivan Andreits, during the laſt Ruſſian war with the Turks,

* Or Andrew Vits, ſignifying in the Ruſſian language, John the ſon of Andrew. This mode of deſignation is held the moſt honorable among the ancient titles of Ruſſia, and is exemplified, in the preſent grand Duke, who is particularly known, by the name of Paul Petrowitz.

com-

commanded a privateer, the property of his family, in the Mediterranean, where having performed some gallant actions, he was promoted by the empress to the rank of captain in the navy; and retiring afterwards to Astracan, he obtained from government the exclusive priviledge of exporting, for a certain term, iron and steel into Persia. As we both were a little conversant in the lingua franca, a language commonly spoken on the coasts of the Mediterranean, a familiar acquaintance was soon produced; and the influence which he had acquired at Baku, enabled me now, a part of his family, to pass my time very pleasantly.

The town of Baku, in the province of Shirwan, is situate on the north side of a bay, and forms nearly an equilateral triangle with one of the sides extending in a parallel with the shore. It is, I imagine, about a mile in circumference, and crouded with inhabitants, most of whom are engaged in commerce.

The bay is capacious and sheltered by the land, against all winds except the south, whose violence is also much broken by the intervention of two small islands. The southern and largest of those islands, was, according to information of the people, united to the continent, which in that Quarter presents a low termination, but it had been insulated by the influx of the sea, whose waters have evidently encroached on the western shore of the Caspian, in the course of the last forty years.

Baku, at the period of Mr. Hanway's travels into Persia, had a double wall on the eastern face; but the exterior one is now

levelled by the rise of the sea, and its foundation brought within water-mark. The province of Shirwan produces a large quantity of silk, of which about four hundred tons are annually imported at Astracan; saffron of a good quality is also produced there, and constitutes a valuable article of trade. A society of Moultan Hindoos, which has long been established in Baku, contributes largely to the circulation of its commerce; and with the Armenians they may be accounted the principal merchants of Shirwan. The Hindoos of this quarter, usually embark at Tatta, a large insular town in the lower tract of the Indus, whence they proceed to Bassorah, and there accompany the karavans which are frequently passing into Persia; some also travel inland to the Caspian sea, by the road of Kandahar and Herat; but the number is small, and they grievously complain of the oppressions and insults of the Mahometans.

On the 31st of March, I visited the Atashghah, or place of fire; and on making myself known to the Hindoo mendicants, who resided there, I was received among these sons of Brimha, as a brother; an appellation they used, on perceiving that I had acquired some knowledge of their mythology, and had visited their most sacred places of worship. This religious retirement, where the devotees worship their deity in the semblance of fire, is a square of about thirty yards, surrounded with a low wall, and contains many apartments; in each of which is a small volcano

of

of ſulphureous fire, iſſuing from the ground through a furnace or funnel, conſtructed in the form of an Hindoo altar.

This fire is appropriated to the uſes of worſhip, cookery, and fortifying the feeble Hindoos againſt the rigor of the winter ſeaſon. On cloſing the funnel, the flame is immediatly extinguiſhed, when a hollow ſound is heard, by applying the ear to the aperture, accompanied with a ſtrong and cold current of air, which is inflamed at pleaſure by placing near it any illuminated matter. The flame is of a pale clear colour, without a perceptible ſmoke, and emits a vapor ſtrongly impregnated with ſulphur, which conſiderably impeded my reſpiration, until by ſitting on the ground I brought my head lower than the level of the furnace. The Hindoos had a wan emaciated appearance, and were oppreſſed by an hectic cough, which continued to affect me during my ſtay at the Ataſhghah. The ground within the enclofure abounds in this ſubterraneous air, which iſſues from artificial channels, but in theſe contracted ſpaces, it ſeems only capable of producing flame by the application of a foreign fire. Excluſive of the fires pertaining to the Hindoo apartments, a large one ariſing from a natural cleft in an open place, inceſſantly burns, whence it would ſeem that no extraneous object is requiſite to impart an illumination to the larger evaporations of this air. On the outſide of the wall are ſeen many of theſe volcanos, which have the appearance of lime-kilns, and one of them is conveniently adapted by the Hindoos to the uſes of a funeral pile. The general ſpace

which

which contains this volcanic fire, forms a low flat hill flanting towards the sea, the soil of which consists of a sandy earth intermixed with stones. No mountainous land is seen from the Ateshgaah, nor any violent eruptions of flame; nature seems here to have adopted a gentle and inoffensive medium of discharging her discordant atoms, which in other quarters of the globe shake her with convulsions, and pour around a horrid devastation.

In the description of this natural phænomenon, I have cautiously adhered to the simple fact, without presuming to discuss its cause or properties. These are branches of science, I am little skilled in, and ill-enabled to elucidate. Had the opportunities which have been thrown in my way fallen to a Cavendish, or a Priestley, the strongest and most ornamental pillars of the fabric of natural philosophy, a larger scope of knowledge might have been opened to the world, and talents which have been long beheld with admiration, rendered still more conspicuous.

The black and white naptha is found in the province of Shirwan, in great plenty; the first floats thinly on the surface of certain springs or ponds, whence it is collected and preserved in jars; it seems to possess many of the properties of camphire, and is successfully employed in allaying external pains and inflamed tumours. The black naptha or bitumen, is produced in the same manner as the the white, but more abundantly and on larger pieces of water, and with a scum three or four inches thick, of the consistence of tar. The houses of Baku most of which have

flat

flat roofs, are covered on the top with this material, which is found a ſubſtantial defence againſt the rain; and when formed into ſmall cakes or balls with a mixture of ſand, is commonly uſed by the lower claſs of people as a ſubſtitute for the fuel of wood, which in this province is thinly produced.

THIS quarter of Shirwan in aſpect and the nature of its ſoil, reſembles the province of Khoraſan; there is the ſame want of wood and large ſtreams, and in the winter the air is equally bleak and piercing; with the difference that in Shirwan it is ſubject to fogs, which, I apprehend, are cauſed by the vicinity of the Caſpian ſea. The ſoil yields abundant crops of good wheat and barley, the bread of which conſtitutes the food of the common people; the higher ranks only are enabled to procure rice, which is chiefly imported from Mazanderan and Ghilan. The mutton is fat and well taſted, being of the large tailed ſheep, and is ſold at the rate of one penny and three halfpence per pound. Apples, pears, grapes, and cheſnuts, all of a good kind, are produced in plenty. And a wine is manufactured by the Armenians, at the town of Shahmachee,* which in flavor and ſubſtance, is not unlike the red wine of Bourdeaux; were the grapes carefully cultivated, and the proceſs well underſtood, this wine would be much eſteemed in Europe. The province of Shirwan has Derbent incluſively on the north; the Caſpian ſea on the eaſt; the territory

* The former capital of that province.

of Aſtara on the ſouth, and parts of Georgia and the diſtricts of Gunjah on the weſt.

Old Shahmachee, the former capital, is ſituated about ſeventy miles inland of Baku, and for its trade, wealth, and population, was, after Iſpahan, ranked among the moſt flouriſhing cities of Perſia. To puniſh a rebellion, which the inhabitants had raiſed againſt the government of Nadir Shah, this city was raſed and depopulated; but that the empire might not be deprived of a mart, ſo happily placed for foreign commerce, that prince formed, about ten miles to the ſouth-weſt of the old city, a new Shahmachee.* Fultah Ali Khan, the chief of Shirwan, reſides generally at Derbent, but he gratifies a rapacious diſpoſition, by making frequent circuits through the province, which he ſeverely harraſſes. The vicinity of general Potemkin's army has made him fearful of its nearer approach, and he is now endeavouring, by every token of reſpect and acknowledged dependance, to obtain a favourable connection with the Ruſſian empire.

Having laid before you, the more material part of my obſervations on Shirwan, I cannot reſiſt the impulſe of calling your notice, for a moment to the diſpoſition and temper of a ſmall

* An extenſive trade of ſilk formerly was maintained between Shahmachee and the Black ſea, through which channel, large quantities of that commodity were imported into Turkey, and thence into Europe. This trade though ſtill exiſting is much diminiſhed ſince the Ruſſians, by obtaining the dominion of the Caſpian, have made a monopoly of the Perſian ſilk.

but

but extraordinary portion of its preſent inhabitants. Human nature takes a portion of its prominent features from national prejudices, from education, and from government; nor muſt we excluđe climate from its ſhare of the formation. This remark aroſe from a view of the Ataſhghah at Baku, where a Hindoo is found ſo deeply tinctured with the enthuſiaſm of religion, that though his nerves be conſtitutionally of a tender texture, and his frame relaxed by age,* he will journey through hoſtile regions, from the Ganges to the Volga, to offer up a prayer at the ſhrine of his God.

When the ambitious ſtrides of the Ruſſian empire, on the ſide of Turkey, by the late acquiſitions of the Crim, are attentively conſidered, and its rapid progreſs into the moſt valuable provinces of Perſia, we are compelled to beſtow applauſe on the policy of a government which has ſo dextrouſly ordered its meaſures, that theſe valuable additions of power and wealth are daily accumulated without attracting the notice of Europe, may almoſt without its knowledge. Waving any inveſtigation of the political effects which may ſpring from the riſe or fall, or the increaſing grandeur of nations, I will here only obſerve, that the influence acquired by Ruſſia, in the north-weſt quarter of Perſia, has been accompanied with reciprocal benefits, and that were it

* Among the Hindoos at the Ataſhghah, was an old man, a native of Delli, who had viſited all the celebrated temples of northern and ſouthern India, and whom I afterwards ſaw at Aſtracan.

wholly annexed to the Ruſſian dominions, the body of people would reap eſſential advantages; their perſons and property would derive a ſecurity, of which they have been long deprived, and in ſubjection to the orders of a civilized, active government, they would neceſſarily become uſeful ſubjects and profitable members of ſociety.

THE kingdom of Perſia, ſince the period of the Afghan invaſion,* has preſented an unvaried ſcene of warfare and diſtraction; where every ſpecies of a ſavage rapine has been exercised with boundleſs ſway; and at this day, Perſia may be ſaid to exhibit a vaſt tomb, piled up with the victims of ambition, avarice, and revenge. It were difficult to ſay whether more of its people in the laſt ſixty years, have fallen in the field, or by the hand of the executioner and aſſaſſin. For they have had a full occupation, eſpecially in the latter part of the government of Nadir Shah, whoſe revenues were at length drained from the blood of his ſubject.

THE cruelties committed by this prince have been diffuſely treated; all claſſes of men, even our boys at ſchool, are converſant in the barbarous exploits of Khuli Khan; it may not however be ſuperfluous to notice ſome facts, which ſeem to have largely contributed to ſully the memory of Nadir, who at one period of his life, maintained no ill founded claims to heroic fame. At

* Which happened about the year 1720.

the

the close of this prince's reign, his body and his mind indicated equal signs of disorder, which was supposed to have been caused or augmented by domestic treachery, and the effects of excessive fatigue.

Conspiracy and rebellion arose all around him, and he had no sooner quelled the insurrections of a province, than his departure was marked by the murder of the officers and successive revolts. Seeing his authority endlessly trampled on, and that partial punishment was insufficient to give it strength, he gave loose to a perhaps constitutional ferocity, which had been tempered by his understanding, but which these events inflamed to madness, and often instigated to the indiscriminate extirpation of a district. But what seemed most to embitter and disturb his mind, was the perfidy of his family; the defection of those from whom he had vainly expected aid and attachment. His favourite son and apparent successor, had been entrusted with the regency of Persia, during the expedition to Hindostan, and presuming on the distant occupations of his father, he had prepared measures, it is alledged, to ascend the throne.

This increasing malady,* of Nadir, sharpened by public and domestic calamity, ultimately rendered him a monster of cruelty; and his rage extending usually to those, whose offices equalled

* An extreme restiveness.

an attendance on his perſon,* he was approached with a conſtant dread. Wearied out at length by the undeviating courſe of his tyranny and cruelties, which like a peſtilence had thinned the land, ſome of the principal officers of the court, ſtimulated alſo, it is ſaid, by one of his nephews, aſſaſſinated him in the month of April, 1749, while he was encamped in the northern quarter of Khoraſan, not far diſtant from the place of his birth.

HAVING held out that ſide of Nadir's character which excites only diſguſt and horror, it were but ſimple juſtice to his memory, to notice thoſe paſſages of his life which will place him in a light, where princes ever appear in the moſt grateful colours. On the event of his ſucceſſes in India, he exempted his Perſian dominion from all taxes, for the ſpace of three years; and after diſcharging the military arrears, which amounted to four millions ſterling, he gave the army a gratuity of ſix months pay, with a like ſum to the civil ſervants of the camp.

AFTER the battle of Karnat, when Nadir had overthrown the empire of India, and poſſeſſed the perſon of the king, one of the Moghul omrah's repreſented to him, that among the Dehli troops were an hundred thouſand horſes fit for field ſervice,

* It is ſaid that the officers in waiting, inſtead of entering on the ordinary topics of a court, were uſed to make anxious and unfeigned enquiries into the ſtate of the ſhah's body, and ever expreſſed much joy, at an imperial evacuation, which they imagined would ſecure an exiſtence for the day.

and

and which his order would immediatly produce. Nadir Shah, in the language of a prince, obſerved that he granted to the Moghul army, an unreſerved quarter, which ſhould not be infringed; that the bread of an Aſiatic ſoldier depends on his horſe, which were he deprived of, himſelf and his family would be reduced to beggary; that it is repugnant to humanity to treat thoſe with rigor, whom fortune has thrown into our power, and it was his determined will, that the Indian ſoldiers ſhould not be in any degree inſulted or moleſted.*

NADIR SHAH, in the proſperous periods of his life, held out an ample protection to merchants of every ſect and nation, and zealouſly ſought to eſtabliſh a liberal commerce throughout Perſia, which he ſaw poſſeſſed of various valuable commodities. When the mercantile property of Mr. Hanway, was plundered at Aſterabad, that gentleman prefered his complaint in perſon to the ſhah, who directing an inveſtigation into the account, iſſued an effectual order on the governor of the province for a full reſtitution of the effects or the amount.

In the vigorous attempts, which this prince made to introduce the European art of navigation and ſhip-building into his country; he evinced a genius rarely found in the mind of an Aſiatic. It was his intention, by the aſſiſtance of John Elton, to erect fortified ſtations on the eaſt ſide of the Caſpian ſea, that a ſtability

* Frazer's hiſtory of Nadir Shah.

might

might be given to his conquests in Khieva, and the Tartars checked in their depredations on the province of Aſterabad. After Elton had, with vaſt labor, completed the building of a veſſel, in which he encountered obſtinate difficulties, as well from a jealouſy of the Perſians of his riſing favor with the ſhah as diſguſt at an irkſome ſervice, he was directed to examine the Tartar ſhore of the Caſpian, and to make choice of an eligible ſituation for a ſettlement. But the coaſt, according to the report of Elton, being found deſtitute of good water, the deſign was relinquiſhed.

NADIR SHAH, contrary to the general character of the Perſians, who are impreſſed with a more perſecuting ſpirit than any other Mahometan nation, gave a common toleration to the worſhip of the inhabitants, whether Chriſtians, Hindoos, or Jews, and largely retrenched the power and wealth of the prieſts, who during the latter period of the Suffuee dynaſty, had engroſſed the chief direction of government. That Nadir might incapacitate their revenge for the death of the mollah Baſhi,* who had been executed for refuſing aſſent to a plan of this prince for introducing the Sooni religion into Perſia, and to accommodate other ſalutary purpoſes, he demanded an account of the vaſt revenues which had been aſſigned to the church; they informed him, according to the tenor of Fraſer's relation of this event, that their property was applied to the uſes, for which it had been allotted; in ſalaries for

* High-prieſt.

the

the priests, in the maintenance of numerous colleges and mosques, in which prayers were incessantly offered up for the success of the arms of the prince, and of the prosperity of the Persian empire.

NADIR observed to them, that experience had manifested the inutility of their prayers, since for the space of fifty years past, the nation had been verging to decay, and ultimately had been reduced by invasions and rebellion to a state of ruin; when God's victorious instruments, pointing to his army, had come to its relief, and were now ready to sacrifice their lives to its defence and glory; that the wants of these poor priests, his soldiers, must be supplied, and he therefore determined that the greatest portion of the church lands should be appropriated to their use. The mandate being immediately carried into execution, produced a revenue equal to three million of sterling money. The priests, enraged at this assumption, exerted their utmost abilities in stirring up the army and the people against the shah; but the former being composed, in a large proportion, of the Sooni sect, ridiculed their situation, and the body of the inhabitants, when they considered that the edict would liberate them from a part of the general taxation, were not dissatisfied.

NADIR SHAH having accomplished this purpose, ordered the attendance of the chiefs of the people, and making a formal declaration of the measure which had been adopted, told them if they wanted priests, they must provide them at their own charge; that having himself little occasion for their services, he would not con-

contribute to their [illegible]. Such was Nadir Shah before calamity had harraſſed [illegible] and diſeaſe his body. The actions of men, however [illegible] nature or improved by knowledge, are ſtrongly ſhaped by the ſurrounding events of human life. Let the man whom we have but now viewed with admiration, towering down the tide of fortune with a ſwelling ſail, and marking his progreſs by conſpicuous marks of glory and renown, be thrown on the rough ſea of trouble, without a ſhelter to cover him from its fury; or let him be ſtretched on the couch of ſickneſs, helpleſs, and racked with pain, we ſhall ſpeedily ceaſe from wonder and applauſe, and with difficulty credit the identity of the object.

HAVING in detached pieces, and I fear with a wide deviation from order, deſcribed the moſt important events of the Perſian empire, from the Afghan invaſion to the death of Nadir Shah, I could have wiſhed briefly to connect that epocha with the preſent period; but no document has come to my knowledge, ſufficiently authentic or clear, for the illuſtration of the whole of this interval.

PREVIOUSLY to the adminiſtration of Kareem Khan, many competitors for the throne of Perſia came forward, and encountered a various tranſient fortune, until all the race of Nadir, and the Sofis' were extirpated, except Shah Rock, the chief of Muſchid, a ſketch of whoſe life, has been already noticed. Kareem

reem Khan,* from a marauding horſeman became the ſucceſsful chieftain, and proclaiming himſelf the regent of the empire, during the minority of a deſcendant of the Sofi family, whom he pretended to have diſcovered, eſtabliſhed his reſidence at Shiraz. It appears that Saadut Khan, the brother of the regent, took Baſſorah† from the Turks after a year's ſiege; and during the Perſian government of that place, Kareem Khan gave diſtinguiſhed indulgencies to the Engliſh reſidents eſtabliſhed there, whoſe factory and property, when the city fell into his poſſeſſion, were fully ſecured to them. The adminiſtration of Kareem Khan, was involved in a ſeries of hoſtilities againſt the Turks and Arabs, over whom, except the capture of Baſſorah, he obtained but trivial advantages.

At the period of the regent's death, which happened about the year 1778, Saadut Khan was ſtationed with a ſmall force at Baſſorah, and ſolicitous of ſpeedily reaching Shiraz, the theatre of action, he abandoned Baſſorah, which again acknowledged the power of the Turks. When Saadut Khan approached Shiraz, he found the gates ſhut againſt him by a Zacchi Khan, a branch of his family, who ſeizing on the city, and the perſon of Kareem Khan's ſon, then a youth, an-

* He made no ſcruple of avowing, that in his youth he purſued the occupation of a robber, and that his foreteeth had been demoliſhed by the kick of an aſs, which he had ſtolen and was carrying off.

† This event happened in the year 1774.

nounced himſelf the ruler of Southern Perſia. The young man having evinced a diſpoſition to ſave the intereſts of his uncle, Zacchi Khan gave orders that he ſhould be put to death. The ſentence by a reverſe in no rare practice at a Mahometan court, was executed on himſelf, and Saadut Khan was admitted into Shiraz, with a participation of the affairs of government. He ſoon formed a combination againſt his nephew, whom he ultimately depoſed, on a charge of debauchery and profuſe expenditure of the public treaſure.

During the adminiſtration of Kareem Khan, a body of troops had been ſent to quell ſome inſurrection in a diſtant part of the country, under an Ali Morad, who returning ſucceſsful, with an army diſpoſed to promote his purpoſes, preferred a claim to the government; the iſſue of a civil war, proſecuted through a ſeries of depredation, murder, and treachery, gave Ali Morad the poſſeſſion of Shiraz, where he put to the ſword, the whole family of Kareem Khan, with their adherents.* A Perſian of Iſpahan, ſpeaking to me of the actions of Ali Morad, and extolling his military genius, ſaid, that he poſſeſſed a ſcimetar of a large ſize and ſuperior quality, on the blade of which were engraved the names of the twelve imaums, the directors of its edge, and the ſecurity of its victories.

* He was related to the family of Kareem Khan; it is ſaid, that on this event, three hundred perſons were maſſacred.

The

THIS comment on the Mahometan's ſtory, would in fact tell us, that whilſt the ſword of Ali Morad is thus patroniſed by his twelve ſaints, there is no ſervice, however entangled by the ties of faith and honor, that he may not cut aſunder with impunity, even with applauſe. Ali Morad, who has eſtabliſhed the ſeat of his government at Iſpahan, took Shiraz in 1778, or 1779, at which period, a gentleman of my acquaintance reſided at Baſſorah, and has ſince communicated to me ſome tracts of the hiſtory of Kareem Khan, and of thoſe chiefs who appeared in action after his death.

THIS gentleman whoſe veracity and diſcerning judgment may be confided in, draws a melancholy picture of the ſouthern provinces of Perſia. He ſays, that the inteſtine feuds and commotions gave a pretext for the perpetration of every crime diſgraceful to human nature, and produced ſuch daring acts of flagitiouſneſs, that the people reſembled demons rather than men. It was uſual, he ſays, for one half of the inhabitants of a village, to keep watch at night, that they might not be murdered by the other, which if not equally vigilant became ſubject to a ſimilar fate. But enough of this ſcene of blood, which degrades our race below the beaſts of the field, and permit me in my deſultory manner, to convey you again to the banks of the Caſpian. It having been already noticed, that the dominion of this ſea is veſted without competition in the empire of Ruſſia, which has alſo obtained a ſtrong influence in ſome of the bordering

provinces, it may not be foreign to rational enquiry, to examine the ſtages by which Ruſſia has arrived at this acceſſion of power.

In the year 1722, Peter the Great was ſolicited by Thamas Khan, the ſon of the Shah Huſſeyn, to aſſiſt him in expelling the Afghans from Perſia, who had driven his father from the throne, and continued to hold poſſeſſion of an extenſive portion of the kingdom; and to ſtimulate Ruſſia to the grant of this aid, the Perſian prince ſtipulated to cede in perpetuity the provinces of Ghilan and Shirwan. This propoſal being acceded to, Peter, accompanied by the empreſs Katherine, embarked at Aſtracan with a large force, and proceeding along the weſt coaſt of the Caſpian, landed at Agrechan, in the province of Mingrelia, about two hundred miles to the ſouthward of the mouth of the Wolga; from thence he moved to the relief of Derbent, which had been beſieged by the Afghans, and ſtationing a party of three hundred men in the caſtle, advanced a day's march into Perſia; where he was met by the deputies of Baku, and Shahmachee who ſought his protection againſt the Afghans, then making ſtrenuous exertions to reduce theſe places.

Peter was preparing to undertake the ſervice, when a Turkiſh envoy arrived in the camp, and repreſented, that his maſter having annexed Shahmachee to the Turkiſh dominion, was much diſpleaſed at the appearance of a Ruſſian power in that quarter, and

and that unleſs the emperor withdrew his forces, he was directed to declare war againſt Ruſſia.

PETER having lately felt the ſuperior ſtrength of the Turks in the unfortunate campaign of Pruth, and being then in a foreign country, deſtitute of the reſources neceſſary for commencing hoſtilities againſt ſo powerful an enemy, he conſented to a peaceable return to his own dominions. The Turkiſh envoy accompanied the army to the northern limits of Perſia, where he remained until it had embarked for Aſtracan. The party which had been lodged in the fort of Derbent did not join the army in its retreat, but at the ſolicitation of the inhabitants continued in that ſtation, until the Ruſſians at a future period appeared on the Caſpian, while thoſe of Baku deprived of the hope of ſuccour, received a body of Afghan troops into the town, and ſubmitted to the government of Iſpahan.

THE Ruſſians had conſtructed a ſmall fort on the river Millu Kenti, in the territory of the Leſghi Tartars, and garriſoned it with five hundred men, who after the departure of the grand army, were attacked by a large Afghan force and wholly deſtroyed. Peter, it is ſaid, loſt in this expedition, a third part of his troops, by ſickneſs, fatigue, and onſets of the Leſghis; a loſs the more mortifying, as it was then attended by a ſubverſion of the ſanguine project he had formed, of extending his conqueſt into the interior provinces of Perſia.

IT appears that this event was followed in a ſhort time, by an

an ultimate and formal convention between the courts of Conſtantinople and Peterſburgh, which ſtipulated that Schamachie, the territories of Armenia, Georgia, and Melitane, ſhould be held permanent appendages of the Port; and that Peter ſhould be left at liberty to proſecute his deſigns on the provinces of [illegible] bordering on the Caſpian ſea.

In the latter end of the year 1722, the Perſian chief of Ghilan deputed an agent to Aſtracan with powers to deliver up Reſhd, the capital of the province, to a Ruſſian garriſon, ſhould it be immediately diſpatched to the relief of the city, then invested by the Afghans. The emperor aſſenting to the meaſure, diſpatched by ſea a thouſand men to Ghilan, but on their arrival they were refuſed admittance by the inhabitants, who alarmed at the delay of the aid, and threatened with ſevere vengeance if they formed any connection with the Ruſſian government, had entered into a negociation with the Afghan officer for the ſurrender of the city. The Ruſſian detachment formed an entrenchment on the ſea-ſhore, where it remained until a reinforcement of four thouſand men came from Aſtracan, with orders to force an entrance into Reſhd; but this ſervice was not found neceſſary, for on the arrival of the additional force, the gates of Reſhd were immediately thrown open, and the whole province of Ghilan became ſubject to Ruſſia.

The officer who commanded the auxiliary troops, had in his paſſage down the Caſpian, touched at Baku, where he was directed

directed to lodge a garriſon, conformably to a previous requiſition of the Perſian governor, but the ſuccour arriving too late, the place had ſubmitted to an Afghan army. Peter anxious to acquire ſo valuable an acquiſition, diſpatched in the courſe of the following year, 1723, a ſtrong naval armament from Aſtracan, which entering the port of Baku,* took the fort after a ſhort bombardment. It is ſaid that previouſly to this ſiege, the Perſians had never ſeen a mortar, and that when the Ruſſian bomb-ketch was warped into its ſtation, they ridiculed the attempt of ſo ſmall a veſſel preparing to attack the fort; but the deſtruction of the buildings, and the carnage which enſued, ſpeedily converted their contempt into aſtoniſhment and fear.

THESE leading lines of the progreſs and eſtabliſhment of the Ruſſian power on the Caſpian ſea, are largely borrowed from the memoirs of a captain Bruce, who ſerved in Peter's army during the firſt Perſian expedition, and who ſeems to have made his obſervations with an accurate judgment; he has certainly related them with ſimplicity and candor. His documents alſo correſponding with the information which I collected in Perſia, this ſketch is laid before you with the greater confidence. From the period at which Peter fixed his power in the provinces of Shirvan and Ghilan, to the year 1732, when Nadir de-

* This word, I am informed, is compoſed of the Perſian words, Pad and ku, ſignifying a windy hill; it is certain that a ſtrong wind generally prevails at that place.

poſed

poſed Shah Thamas, and aſſumed the diadem of Perſia, it is not ſeen that any material occurences interpoſed to diſturb the Ruſſian territory, or commerce on the Caſpian. But when this meteor of the eaſt had blazed forth, and in its courſe confounded or diſmayed the ſurrounding nations, the Ruſſians then involved in domeſtic commotion and intrigue, were compelled to evacuate their Caſpian dominion, with only the permiſſion to hold a reſident at the ſea-port of Enzillee, for the management of the Ghilan ſilk-trade.*

FULTAH ALI KHAN, having within theſe late years, engaged in a deſultory warfare with the Leſghi Tartars, ſought the aſſiſtance of the Ruſſians, who after repelling the incurſions of the enemy, held for ſome time poſſeſſion of the fort of Derbent. It has been again reſtored; but the conditions are not known, though we may infer from the policy of the court of Petersburgh, which is not in the habit of retrenching its limits, that the cauſe of withdrawing the garriſon of Derbent, did not proceed from mere motives of liberality.

THAT your knowledge of this quarter of Perſia may be more complete and ſatisfactory, I have been prompted to annex in this

* In the year 1746, an embaſſy was ſent by the empreſs Elizabeth to Nadir Shah, a relation of which has been publiſhed by Mr. William Cooke, who accompanied it in the capacity of a ſurgeon; and at that time it appears that except the Enzille factory, and a commercial reſidency at Derbent, the Ruſſians did not poſſeſs any eſtabliſhment in Perſia.

place,

place, a ſurvey of the Caſpian ſea made by Captain Bruce, in the year, 1723, by the order of Peter, after his return from Perſia. The relation of this ſurvey is deficient in the detail of bearings, and often of the ſoundings, nor is it known whether theſe remarks were ever recorded, or have been omitted by the publiſher; but the information is much wanted, for except the Ruſſians, other nations are ſtill trivially acquainted with the coaſts of the Caſpian ſea; eſpecially with that which confines Tartary.

CAPTAIN BRUCE ſays, "we received orders to go all round "the Caſpian ſea to ſurvey and ſound it, and lay down in a "chart all the rivers, creeks, and bays, with all the different "ſoundings; and for this ſervice, had one of the ſtrongeſt new "built galleys of forty oars, carrying two eighteen pounders in "her prow, twenty four ſwivels, and three hundred men, at-"tended with four boats, two of eight oars, one of ten, and "another of twelve, each boat carrying one ſwivel gun; and "two ſub-engineers were appointed for my aſſiſtants.

"THE 18th of April 1723, went down to the mouth of "the Volga,* and next morning proceeding from thence eaſt-"ward, we paſſed in very ſhallow water along the coaſt, ſo "very overgrown with weeds, that we were obliged to keep at "five or ſix miles diſtant from the ſhore, in from ten to twelve

* Forty miles below the city of Aſtracan.

" feet water; and all the way, even for eight days time, we " could find no place to land, even our ſmalleſt boats. We " ſaw two little iſlands in the way, but we could not come " at them for reeds, but we killed a great number of ſea fowl, " that have their neſts in theſe iſlands, and had plenty of fiſh " and fowl, all the way. We ſailed and rowed, as the wind " permitted, but came to an anchor every evening that no- " thing might eſcape our obſervation.

" On the 26th, we arived at the river Jaick, the mouth of " which is one hundred fathoms broad, and eighteen feet deep; " we went to the town of Jaick, that ſtands about one mile " up the river, which is well fortified, and has a ſtrong gar- " riſon of Ruſſians and Tartars,* to keep the Kalmuck and " Nagayan Tartars in awe, and to prevent them from attack- " ing each other, as they live in perpetual enmity.

" The Nagayans inhabit all the country from Aſtracan to " the Jaick, all along the ſea coaſt, being two hundred and fifty " verſts † in extent; and the Kalmucks poſſeſs that vaſt tract of " land from Saratoff to the great deſert of Beriket, and that " tract to the ſouth of the Jaick, all along the ſhore to the " river Yembo, which is 93 verſts from this place; we ſtayed

* The inhabitants of that tract of Tartary, which has been completely ſubdued by Ruſſia and now a ſtationary people.

† At the common calculation of two thirds of a mile to a verſt, this diſtance is 170 miles.

" only

" only one day, at Jaick,* and provided ourſelves with freſh meat " and water.

" BEING informed by the governor of the place, that there " was a large gulf to the eaſtward, extending to the river Yembo, " but too ſhallow to admit our galley. I ſent one of our " engineers to go round and ſurvey it, and join us again on " the oppoſite point, for which we proceeded immediately; and " ſailing ſouth, we anchored on the 30th, between the iſland " of Kulala and the point of the main, in ſix fathoms water, " in view of the mountains of Kanayan, and from whence we " had a clean and deep ſhore. At this place begin the ter- " ritories of the Turkiſtan and Turcomanian Tartars. During our " ſtay, waiting the return of the engineer, we laid in plenty " of wood and water, and diverted ourſelves with fowling and " fiſhing; we caught here a Beluga of upwards of ſix yards " long and thick in proportion, from the roe of which we " made excellent caviar, which laſted us above a month.

" OUR engineer with the boats joined us, on the 10th " of May, who reported that in the ſurvey of the bay, he

* The Ruſſians ſend annually, two or three barks from Aſtracan to Uir Gunge, a Turcoman mart, ſituated on this river, above the town of Jaick, whence in return for European commodities, as ſteel, bar-iron, and remnants of broad-cloth, they import furs, and ſalt fiſh. The Jaick continues frozen from the month of December to the middle of March, during which period, the Uir Gunge trade ceaſes; nor do the Tartars, who are chiefly merchants of Bochara, and Samur Kund, reſide at that place, after the departure of the Ruſſian veſſels. —— GEORGE FORSTER.

" found only from five to eight feet water; that the whole " ſhore was ſo covered with reeds, that they could only land " at the mouth of the river Yembo, which was both broad " and deep. We left the iſland of Kulala, on the 11th., on " our way to the gulf of Iſkander, where we arrived on the " 26th; all along this coaſt there is a great depth of water, ſo " that we could land with our galley on any part of it.

" A GREAT number of ſmall rivers fall into the ſea from " the mountains, but we could not learn their names although " I attempted to get information, by ſending the twelve oared " boat with an officer and twenty four men, and an interpreter " to ſpeak to the people on ſhore; but they no ſooner came " near enough, than the Tartars let fly a volley of arrows at " our people, who returned the ſalute with a diſcharge of their " muſquetry at them; and we fired one of our great guns from " the galley at them, which made them retire to the mountains " in good haſte. They always appeared in great parties, on " horſeback, and well armed, and we ſaw ſeveral of their hords " or camps at a great diſtance, from which they move at plea- " ſure, and wander from place to place, for thoſe Tartars have " no ſettled abode; they contined to attend us every day in great " parties, to watch our motions, out of the reach of our guns, " and they diſappeared entirely on our arrival in the gulf of Iſ- " kander, which is one hundred and eighty four verſts from the " iſland of Kulala. In this gulf which is thirty verſts in length

" and

" and eighteen broad, we found near the ſhore from five to ſix " fathoms water, with a clear ground and exceeding good an- " chorage."

On the 10th of April, the veſſel in which I had embarked, ſailed for Baku, and coaſting the north-eaſt head-land of the bay, anchored at Abſhhorah,* a road-ſtead on a rocky ſhore, at which place moſt of the paſſengers came on board. The Armenians and Greeks had remained to celebrate the Eaſter-feſtival at Baku, where they have been permitted to erect a ſmall chapel. The Perſians of Shirwan, whether, from a frequent intercourſe with the Greeks, who introduce much wealth into their country, or from a dread of the Ruſſian power, ſhew a leſs diſlike to the Chriſtians than thoſe of the eaſtern provinces.†

Not being conſidered a ſtaunch member of the faith, or thought to poſſeſs a ſufficient ſanctity of manners, I was not invited to aſſiſt at the concluſion of the Eaſter-faſt. But, much againſt my will, I became a partaker of it on board the veſſel. On the morning of Eaſter-ſunday, long before break of day, the whole ſhip's crew, from the maſter to the cook, ruſhed tumultuouſly into the cabin, where I was aſleep, and bellowed out their prayers to the figures of the virgin, and their patron, Saint

* A Perſian compound word, ſignifying ſalt water.

† A ſociety of Perſians, of the Sooni faith, is eſtabliſhed at Shahmachee, and its neighbourhood, who are governed by a chief of their own tribe, a proprietor of certain diſtricts held in Feu of Futtah Ali Khan.

Nicholas,

Nicholas, for the ſpeedy deliverance of Chriſt from the grave, which as ſoon as was ſuppoſed to be effected, they ſaluted each other by a kiſs, ſaying "Chriſt has riſen."

During the fervor of this occupation, I was wholly overlooked and trampled on. They did not however neglect me in the more ſubſtantial part of the feſtival; for though in bed, they placed near me a large pudding ſtuffed with meat, which they earneſtly deſired me to eat; obſerving that as I muſt have incurred a ſevere reſtraint during their rigorous lent, it was now neceſſary to regale and be merry. They themſelves implicitly conformed to the advice; and from the extraordinary quantity of fleſh meat which they haſtily devoured, during theſe holidays, it ſeemed that they eat as much for the purpoſe of compenſating loſt time, as the gratification of appetite.

On the 13th of April, every perſon and every parcel that could poſſibly find a place being embarked, the veſſel ſailed, paſſing between a ſmall iſland of rocks and the main. On looking around, I was amazed at the crowd of paſſengers, and the lumber that was ſcattered on the deck and ſuſpended from the ſides. I could not have thought it poſſible for ſuch a ſpace to contain ſo much matter. The lodging allotted to me, admitted ſcantily of my length, and of lying only on one ſide; but I was fortunate in an interior ſtation, which ſaved me from being trod on by the other paſſengers, over whom lay my common path. When placed at the ſame board with a Ruſſian, an Armenian, a Greek,

a Greek, and a Perſian, I uſed to inveſtigate with a pleaſing curioſity the cauſe which had linked in the bonds of ſociety, five perſons of different nations, manners, and prejudices. The union was manifeſtly formed by ſelf-intereſt, which when refined by a knowledge of the world, induces men to ſeek profit and pleapleaſure through various channels, and in the purſuit, which is eager and vigorous, many are prompted to break down the ſtrongeſt fences which education or ſuperſtition can plant.

On the evening of the 20th, having ſeen two fiſhing-boats which marked the vicinity of the Aſtracan ſhore, our bark came to an anchor in three fathom water, but no land in ſight. In the evening the wind began to blow with violence, and raiſed the ſea; which in the Caſpian is ſoon agitated, having a ſhort irregular motion and breaking with great force. I had not been long in bed, when the Greek gentleman expreſſed an apprehenſion that the veſſel was touching the ground, which was ſoon verified by a rough ſhock of the rudder. A ſcene of confuſion, marked with various tokens of diſtreſs now enſued. Some were bawling out in the Ruſſian, the Armenian and in the Perſian language, while others were lamenting their fate in Greek and Turkiſh.

Had I not been ſo eſſentially intereſted in the event, which bore a very unpromiſing aſpect, the diverſity of modes adapted in expreſſing a ſenſe of this diſaſter, would have afforded matter of curious notice. Every man was imploring the divine interpoſition

terpoſition in his own manner and language; but my attention was chiefly attracted by a Perſian who had taken refuge in the cabin, a place he imagined of the more ſafety, from the maſter having taken his ſtation there. In a piteous tone, he begged that I would accommodate him with a pillow, that he might compoſe himſelf, and await his laſt hour with reſignation; amidſt his ejaculations which were loud and fervent, he did not once mention the name of Mahomet. The whole force of his prayers were levelled at Ali, on whom he beſtowed every title that could denote ſanctity, or military proweſs; he called on him by the name of the Friend of God, the Lord of the faithful and the Brandiſher of the invincible ſword, to look down on his ſervant, and ſhield him from the impending evil; thinking alſo to obtain the more grace with the father, he would occaſionally launch out into the praiſes of his two ſons.*

THE bales of ſilk, with which the cabin was filled to half its height, being removed forward, the veſſel which ſtruck only at the ſtern, was for a time relieved; but the wind and ſea increaſing, our danger became imminent. I propoſed to the Greek, to throw over ſome part of the cargoe, as the beſt mode of ſaving the reſt, as alſo our lives; and he was diſpoſed to try the expedient, had he not been obſtructed by the paſſengers, who bitterly inveighed againſt the propoſal, and the adventuring Fe-

* Huſſin and Huſſeyn.

ringhee,

ringhee its author, who having nothing to loſe, they ſaid, was little intereſted in the iſſue. Yet I can with truth aver, that in no ſituation of difficulty in which I have been occaſionally involved, did I ever feel a ſtronger reluctance of quitting the "warm precincts of day;" I could not with adequate fortitude reconcile the idea of being loſt on a ſhore, which I had ſo long ſought with labor and anxiety, and which I had approached only to meet deſtruction. But that I might not be taken wholly unprepared I ſecured about my perſon the journal of my route, the only article of property which was in the leaſt valuable.

HAVING obtained the Greek's conſent to cut away ſome heavy lumber which hung from that quarter, and greatly contributed to augment the force of the veſſel's ſtriking the ground; I began to throw into the ſea empty caſks, tubs, and baſkets of fruit; and was proceeding briſkly in the work, when I was driven from my poſt by a ſtrong party of the proprietors.

ON the 22d, before noon, the wind having abated a little, the crew were enabled, though with with difficulty, to hoiſt out the boat, which was out of all proportion, large and heavy; nor did the veſſel ever touch the ground after being diſburthened of this maſs.

ON the 23d, at anchor, the wind moderate but contrary. The veſſel remained nearly in the ſame place until the 28th, when many fiſhing boats came in ſight; not leſs I imagine, than one hundred; and ſome of them viſiting us, we purchaſed

at the rate of a ſhilling a piece excellent ſturgeon, the roes of which, ſtripped of the filaments and ſprinkled with ſalt, without any other preparation, is the common food of the Ruſſians, and of which I have eat heartily. This when dried, is called in Europe, the caviar, and produces a profitable traffick to the city of Aſtracan. The ſturgeon fiſhery is chiefly conducted by Kalmuck Tartars, who find a ready ſale for their fiſh, at numerous factories, eſtabliſhed by the Ruſſians, on the lower parts of the Volga, for the purpoſe of ſalting ſturgeon and preparing the caviar.

HAVING underſtood that the Kalmucks were a migrating people, conſiſting wholly of ſhepherds and ſoldiers, who derived a ſubſiſtance from their broods of cattle, and marauding expeditions, I was ſurprized at ſeeing them occupied in a marine profeſſion. But many thouſands of the Kalmuck race are ſcattered about the northern coaſt of the Caſpian, where in ſmall narrow boats, worked by four or five perſons, they are engaged in the ſturgeon fiſhery during the ſummer months. They often continue many ſucceſſive days at ſea, the water* of which they drink. And they eat in its raw ſtate part of the produce of their labors.

THERE is not perhaps on the face of the earth, a human creature

* At the diſtance of fifteen and twenty leagues from the north ſhore of the Caſpian, the water freſhened by the large rivers flowing into it from that quarter, may be drunk without prejudice; it being only brackiſh, when the wind blows ſtrong from the ſouthward.

who

who lives on coarſer fare, or to a civilized people more diſguſting than a Kalmuck Tartar; not even the ſavages of ſouthern Africa. Putrid fiſh raw, or the fleſh of carrion, horſes, oxen, and camels, is the ordinary food of Kalmucks; and they are more active and leſs ſuſceptible of the inclemency of weather, than any race of men I have ever ſeen. The features of a Kalmuck, though coarſer, bear a ſtriking reſemblance to thoſe of a Chineſe; the upper part of his noſe is ſcarcely ſeen to project from the face, and its extremity is furniſhed with widely dilated noſtrils.

Being anxious to leave the ſhip whoſe proviſions were nearly conſumed, and which from the crowd and filth of the paſſengers, had become very offenſive, I hired in conjunction with the Greek gentleman, a Kalmuck boat to go to Aſtracan. But before I quit the ſubject of the veſſel, I muſt mention to you that we brought from Baku five Hindoos; two of them were merchants of Moultan and three were mendicants, a father, his ſon, and a Sunyaſſee.* The laſt was a hale, ſpirited young man, who impelled by an equal alertneſs in mind and body, blended alſo with a ſtrong tincture of fanaticiſm, was making, it may be termed, the tour of the world; for he did not ſeem to hold it a matter of much concern whither his courſe was directed, provided he was in motion

* The name of a religious ſect of Hindoos, chiefly of the Bramin tribe.

THE Hindoos at Baku had ſupplied his little wants, and recommended him to their agents in Ruſſia, whence he ſaid, he would like to proceed with me to England. The Moultanee Hindoos were going to Aſtracan on a commercial adventure merely, and would not have gone a mile out of the road to have ſerved God or man. When I accuſed the Hindoos of polluting themſelves by drinking the caſk-water, and preparing victuals in the ſhip-kitchen, they obſerved, that they had already become impure by croſſing the forbidden river,* beyond which all diſcrimination of tribes ceaſed. Though ſpirituous liquors are prohibited to the Hindoos, it does not appear that the uſe of bang, an intoxicating weed which reſembles the hemp in Europe, and is prepared either for ſmoking or a draught, is conſidered even by the moſt rigid, a breach of the law, for they drink it without reſerve, and often to exceſs.

IN the evening of the 28th of April, four of us embarked in one of the Kalmuck boats, rowed by four ſtout men, who directing a courſe for the Aſtracan channel, proceeded at the rate of five miles an hour, over very ſmooth water; we reached before night a ſmall inhabited iſland, about twenty five miles diſtant from the veſſel; and as the Kalmucks were fatigued with hard work, it was agreed to go on ſhore for a few hours to give them a reſpite. I landed with joy on the territory of

* The Attoc. — *N. B.* The verſes of the Emperor to the Hindoo Rajah.

Ruſſia;

Ruſſia; and you who have now peruſed the ſtory of my long, laborious journey, will ſee reaſon, without the aid of figurative enlargement, for the pleaſure I felt. The inhabitants of the iſland, who were agents of the ſturgeon fiſhery, received us with cordiality, and when apprized of the Greek gentleman's rank in the ſervice, treated him with much reſpect. In a wooden houſe, cleanly furniſhed in the European manner, which to me was a rare object, we were entertained with a diſh of ſturgeon in broth, good bread, and pure water. Excuſe the ſenſuality of my deſcription; but I muſt give way to an impulſe of joy at the remembrance of that delicious meal. It was perſonally ſerved up by our hoſt, who agreeably, to the ancient cuſtom of Ruſſia waited at table, and performed all the offices of aſſiduous hoſpitality.

At the concluſion of the repaſt, in which the Kalmucks had ſubſequently ſhared, we proceeded on our journey, and leaving John's Iſland * on the left, the lights of which were ſeen, entered the Aſtracan branch of the Volga. About midnight the boatmen became ſo much harraſſed by the labor of the oar, at which they probably had been employed all the preceding day, that it was found neceſſary to refreſh them with a little ſleep, of which I was alſo in great need. Having only a ſpace to ſit

* Called alſo Chattiree Bougarree. It ſtands at the mouth of the Aſtracan channel, and is furniſhed with a light-houſe.

on

on with my legs bent under me, the poſition had long been very painful, and no ſooner did the boat touch ground, than leaping out, I ſpread my cloak on the ground, and ſlept ſoundly three hours. At day light we commenced our journey, which led among numerous low iſlands, covered with reeds, and about eight o'clock in the morning, arrived at a ſtation called the Brand Wacht, about twelve miles within John's Iſland, where a marine guard is poſted for the protection of the cuſtom houſe, and enforcing the occaſional obſervance of quarantine. It was fortunate that I had procured a written teſtimony of my ſituation from the captain of the frigate at Baku, without which I muſt have awaited the orders of the Aſtracan government. We diſcharged the Kalmucks at the Brand Wacht, and hired an eight oared boat, the property of Turkoman Tartars,* who were clothed like Ruſſian ſeamen, and very expert in the management of the oar.

The Turkoman ſubjects of Ruſſia, are an induſtrious quiet people, and have become uſeful ſubjects to the ſtate. Many of them ſerve in the navy and army, where they are received without objection to their religious tenets, which are leſs intemperate, than thoſe of any other of the weſtern Mahometans. Few villages are ſeen on the borders of this branch of the Volga; the land, nearly

* The deſcendants of thoſe Tartars, who were in poſſeſſion of Aſtracan, when it was ſubdued in 1552, by the Czar, Ivan Baſilivitz, ſurnamed the Tyrant.

level

level with the water, is thickly covered with reeds, affording a commodious ſhelter to numerous flocks of wild geeſe, which ſeem to have reſorted thither from all quarters of the globe; nor could they have choſen a fitter place; it is equally ſecluded from the haunts of men and animals, defended by a ſtrong cover, and abundantly ſupplied with freſh water.

When we arrived in ſight of the great church of Aſtracan, which with the other ſpires and high buildings of that city, preſent a beautiful viſta to a long reach of the Volga, my Greek friend aroſe, and making the ſign of the croſs on his body, offered up, with an unaffected decent devotion, a prayer of thankſgiving for his ſafe return to his country; and I truſt that I ſhall not incur your cenſure for having adopted his manner and example. Forms are the leaſt important part of our duty, and the obſervance of this, I held a neceſſary reſpect for the religious worſhip of a man who had rendered me eſſential offices of humanity.

On our arrival at his houſe, which ſtands on the bank of the river, I requeſted leave to retire to a ſeparate apartment until my perſon ſhould undergo a purification, which had now become urgently neceſſary, and ſome European apparel provided. This warm hearted Greek would not liſten to the propoſal, but ſeizing my arm, forcibly dragged me into the room, where his wife, a pretty young woman, and ſome gentlemen of the place were aſſembled. He introduced me to the company, by the name of Signor Georgio, and in a few words, recounted to them the heads of my ſtory.

Though

Though I was clad in an ordinary Perſian dreſs, had a rough beard, and a very weather-beaten face, not one of them ſeemed to notice the uncouth appearance, but by kind and polite congratulations, took every occaſion to diſpel my evident embarraſſment. I ſoon went to bed, where I muſt have been overpowered by a ſtrong ſleep; for the Greek told me in the morning, that he had made repeated attempts to awaken me, fearing that his houſe would have been conſumed by a fire, which had broke out with violence in the neighbourhood. My hoſt inſiſted on furniſhing me with clothing out of his own wardrobe, obſerving that my ſhort ſtay at Aſtracan, would not admit of a new equipment; an Armenian gentleman, who came to welcome the Greek's arrival, propoſed to introduce me to the officer, commanding the Caſpian ſquadron, and to one of my countrymen, a lieutenant in the Ruſſian navy.

The commodore,* who ſpoke the Engliſh language very intelligibly, received us with much politeneſs, and ſent a ſervant to inform Mr. Long, the Engliſh gentleman, of my arrival. The connection which I formed with my countryman, who was of a friendly and chearful diſpoſition, rendered my ſtay at Aſtracan, very pleaſant; and having little other occupation there, than that of a ſpectator, you will neceſſarily ſuppoſe, that I ought to give ſome deſcription of this quarter of Ruſſia; but

* Peter Hannicoff, a knight of one of the military orders.

the

the ſubject has already been ſo amply inveſtigated by writers of almoſt every European nation, that had even my reſidence enabled me to undertake the diſcuſſion, little remains to be deſcribed.

It is ſeen in the hiſtory of Ruſſia, that the Czar, Ivan Baſilovitz, having in the year 1552, conquered the Tartar kingdom of Caſan, he turned his arms againſt the Nogay Tartars of Aſtracan, and ſubdued their country, the capital of which he took by aſſault, and ſtrengthened it by a new fortification in the Aſiatic manner. The ſpace which the territory of Aſtracan occupies on the face of the globe is ſo peculiarly marked, that it enforces the notice of every obſerver. On the eaſt and ſouth-eaſt, it is ſkirted by a wild extenſive deſert, reaching to the habitable quarters of Tranſoxonian Tartary; on the ſouth, it hath the barren ſhores of the Caſpian ſea; on the ſouth-eaſt, a deſert of three or four hundred miles, extending to Circaſſia, which is only ſupplied at two places with freſh water; and on the weſt, another ſpacious waſte divides it from the Black ſea.

On theſe dreary plains, little other veſtige of humanity is ſeen than thinly ſcattered hords of roving Tartars, whoſe rude and ſavage life but increaſes the horror of the ſcene; and, as if the kinder powers of nature had been deſtroyed, or arreſted by ſome malignant influence, not a ſhrub or blade of graſs is to be ſeen on many of theſe plains that is not tainted with noxious qualities. To the north and north-eaſt, the province of Aſtracan is bounded by Ruſſia Proper, and Cazan, on which

ſide alſo a wide tract of barren land is interpoſed. The iſland on which Aſtracan ſtands, as well as its dependant territory, produces no grain, and though ſo deeply ſurrounded by deſerts, no quarter of the Ruſſian dominions is more abundantly ſupplied with this proviſion. The country to the weſtward and ſouthward of Aſtracan, produces a natural ſalt of an excellent quality for domeſtic uſes, which is tranſported from thence to remote parts of the empire, chiefly by water carriage.* The flouriſhing ſtate of the province of Aſtracan, hath alſo been largely promoted by its fiſheries on the Volga and the Caſpian ſea, where the fiſh are procured and ſalted at a cheap rate, and the ſale is very extenſive.

A BRISK traffick has long ſubſiſted between Aſtracan and the Tartars of Bochara and Khieva, who in return for their curious furs and lambſkins, purchaſe a variety of European commodities. Yet the natural advantages of Aſtracan would yield but a ſmall portion of their benefits, did not the Volga furniſh the means of a ſecure and commodious conveyance. This river, which has a courſe of not leſs than two thouſand Britiſh miles, takes its riſe from a lake of the ſame name, in the province of No-

* Saltpetre, though not in large quantities, is found in the vicinity of Aſtracan, which, according to Cooke, is taken out of the earth, and macerated for ſome time in water; then they draw it off, and by adding ſoot and ſome quick lime, evaporate the water, and make as good ſaltpetre as can be made any where. See tracts of Mr. William Cooke, Surgeon.

vogorod,

vogorod, latitude 57, longitude eaſt 51, and after ſkirting numerous cities and mercantile towns, falls into the Caſpian ſea, forty miles below Aſtracan. In this courſe, it receives many rivers and leſſer ſtreams, which ſpreading to the eaſtward, form a navigable communication throughout that wide ſpace of country, lying between Siberia and the Dnieper.

By the Occa which receives the river Moſca and joins the Volga, at the city of Nijnio Novogorod, large boats paſs from Aſtracan to the old capital; and by a canal which unites the Volga with the Miſta, a river ultimately flowing into the Ladoga lake, the ſource of the Neva, an inland navigation is completely opened between the Caſpian and the Baltic ſeas. From the level face of the country, the current * of the Volga has little force, and will admit of boats being warped againſt it, at the rate of three miles an hour.† The city of Aſtracan is ſuppoſed to contain about eighty thouſand inhabitants. Excluſive of the Ruſſians, there is a numerous colony of Nagayan Tartars, (the ancient people of the country), many Greeks, Armenians, and Circaſſians, ſome itinerant Perſians, and a ſmall ſociety of Hindoos.

In the life of Timur Beg, tranſlated from the Perſic by M. Petit de la Croix, Aſtracan is denominated Hadji Terkan, one of the principal cities of the kingdom of Kapchac, which Ti-

* It runs about one and a half, and two miles per hour.

† For a deſcription of the manner in which theſe boats are worked, ſee Hanway's and Bruce's travels.

mur, when he penetrated into that quarter of Tartary, took and deſtroyed. This prince detached alſo a part of his army further up the Volga to Serai,* the capital of Kapchac, which was plundered and reduced to aſhes. In the hiſtory of Timur, I find a paſſage relative to Ruſſia, which for the curious information it conveys, deſerves a diſtinct notice.

TIMUR, in the purſuit of a vanquiſhed enemy, arrived at the river Dnieper, which leaving on the left, he croſſed the Don, and entered the dominion of Ruſſia. The author, in the Engliſh tranſlation, ſays, "our ſoldiers purſued him as far as "Coraſon, the preſent Koreſh, a town of Grand Ruſſia, which "they entirely pillaged. They over-run all the great kingdom of "Muſcovy and Ourous-dgic, or Little Ruſſia, where they took "prodigious droves of cattle, and abundance of women, and girls "of all ages, and of an extraordinary beauty and ſhape. Then "Timur went in perſon to the city of Moſcow, the capital of "Grand Ruſſia, which his ſoldiers plundered, as they had done "all the neighbouring places dependant on it, defeating and cut-"ting in pieces the governors and princes. The Ruſſians and "Muſcovites never beheld their kingdom in ſo bad a condition; "their plains being covered with dead bodies. The army en-"riched themſelves with whatever they could find in this vaſt "country, as ingots of gold, ſilver blades, great quantities of

* An Aſiatic word ſignifying reſidence.

"antioch;

" antioch; very much eſteemed cloth, wove in Ruſſia with a great " deal of ſkill and nicety; vaſt numbers of ſables, black as jet, " and ermins, with which every perſon in the army was ſuf- " ficiently furniſhed, both for his own and his childrens lives; " as likewiſe ſkins of vacaſh, grey and white, ſpotted like tygers " ſkins. They alſo brought away many ſkins of grey and red " foxes, and an infinite number of young colts which had not " been ſhod. It would be tedious to give a detail of all the " booty they obtained in this great country."

WHAT an immenſe ſcope did the conqueſts and invaſions of Timur embrace. His arms were ſeen victorious on the Ganges, and his banners flying on the confines of the Baltic ſea! yet, view the ſcene of the preſent day, and you will behold the great empire, which he founded, mouldered into duſt. Ruſſia which had felt the force of the deſtructive Tartar, and was but yeſterday drawn out of barbariſm and reduced into form, hath already taken ample vengeance* for the diſgrace ſhe then ſuffered; and in the probable revolution of events, promiſes to complete the work which has been ſo ſucceſsfully begun.

DURING the flouriſhing ſtate of Perſia and Turkey, when theſe powers were enabled to reſtrain the Ruſſian empire within its proper limit, Aſtracan was conſidered an important frontier. But

* The imperial family of Turkey is of the Tartar race.

ſince

ſince the decay of the Perſian monarchy, the independance of Georgia, and the ceſſion of the Crimea by the Turks, who in this ſurrender have proclaimed their weakneſs and puſillanimity to the world; and ſince the Tartars who were ſcattered over the eaſtern and weſtern ſides of the Volga, have been either compelled to deſert their haunts, or ſubmit to the Ruſſian power, this province no longer forms the boundary of the empire. The government of Aſtracan, is now directed by a ſyſtem wholly civil and commercial, and the garriſon conſiſts of about fifteen hundred men, who have more the appearance of militia than regular troops, and are conſpicuouſly deficient in military order.

In this city, which occupies a mediate ſituation between Aſia and Europe, there is perhaps a more diverſified aſſemblage of nations, than on any other ſpot on the globe, and a more liberal diſplay of toleration; you ſee the Greek, Lutheran, and Roman churches, mingled with the Mahometan moſque and Hindoo pagoda, and the different ſectaries united by the bonds of a common ſocial compact. The largeſt portion of the induſtry and adventure which ſupports the commerce of Aſtracan, is contributed by the Armenians, who are the proprietors of moſt of the Caſpian veſſels, and the chief conductors of the Perſian trade. By their pliant manners but more by their wealth, which has ſupplied the means of ſecuring the favor of government, the Armenians have acquired a diſtinguiſhed influence

fluence and reſpect in this province. Where they exhibit a cumbrous luxury and ſplendor; and generally adopt the Ruſſian manners. It evidently appears that the extenſive encouragement given to theſe people, has conduced to introduce much wealth and commercial emulation into this part of the empire.

The Hindoos alſo enjoy at Aſtracan very fair indulgence; nor could they in the moſt celebrated places of worſhip in India, perform their rites with more freedom. They are not ſtationary reſidents, nor do they keep any of their females in this city; but after accumulating a certain property they return to India, and are ſucceeded by other adventurers. Being a mercantile ſect of their nation, and occupied in a deſultory ſpecies of traffick, they have neglected to preſerve any record of their firſt ſettlement, and ſubſequent progreſs in this quarter of Ruſſia; nor is the fact aſcertained with any accuracy by the natives of Aſtracan. In the karavanſera allotted to them, which is commodious and detached, they make their ablutions and offer up their prayers, without attracting even the curioſity of the Chriſtians; and they do not fail to gratefully contraſt ſo temperate a conduct with that of Perſia, where their religion, perſon and property, are equally expoſed to the attacks of bigotry and avarice.

Manifest proofs were daily preſented to me of the benefits conferred by the Volga on Aſtracan, and the ſouthern quarters of the province, which though productive of no grain, and but little

little paſturage, are amply ſupplied with proviſions,* from the vicinity of Czaritſin, and even from Caſan, though at the diſtance of one thouſand miles. A grand teſtimony of the uſes of this river, which is formed on common notice, is ſeen in the immediate conſtruction of the city of Aſtracan, which, though not a tree grows in the province, except in gardens, is chiefly compoſed of wooden houſes; numerous veſſels are alſo built in the docks, and vaſt quantity of fuel is conſumed by the inhabitants. All this timber is floated down the Volga, or imported in boats from the upper countries.

DURING my ſhort ſtay at Aſtracan, I daily viſited the marine yard, where I received much pleaſure in viewing the progreſs which the Ruſſians have made in all the degrees of naval architecture, ſince the time of Peter. The ſquadron now in force for the protection of the Caſpian trade, and awing ſuch of the bordering ſtates as may be hoſtile to the deſigns of Ruſſia, conſiſts of five frigates† of twenty guns, one bomb-ketch and ſome tenders. Out of this amount, two frigates with the bomb-ketch are at Aſtracan, one at ſea, and two on the paſſage from Caſan. Theſe veſſels on account of the ſhallows at the mouth of the Volga, are conſtructed on a broad bottom, and draw only eight or nine feet water. An extenſive marine yard

* Wheat bread, bore the price of one and a half farthing per pound, and beef of three farthings per pound.

† Six pounders.

has

has been within this late years eſtabliſhed at Caſan, where the abundant produce of oak timber, and other neceſſary materials, with the advantage of the river, have pointed out the conveniency of building the hulls of the veſſels deſtined for the Caſpian ſervice. The Ruſſians have introduced into their navy, many of the Dutch principles and regulations, which it is probable were adopted by Peter, ſubſequently to his reſidence in Holland, and by the naval officers which he invited from that Country. Some French ordinances relative to the rank and duty of officers, are alſo introduced, but it is not ſeen that their ſyſtem has received any improvement from the marine of England.

The Ruſſian ſeamen, in addition to their diet and clothes, receive nine rubles* per annum, and as an inducement to prefer the naval ſervice, they are ſupplied with a daily ration of fleſh proviſions; an allowance not granted to the army, though it is alſo furniſhed with diet† by the government. The Caſpian ſquadron at this period, acts ultimately under the orders of General Potemkin, whoſe army is ſtationed between the Caſpian and the Black-ſea. A part of this force has been lately detached into Georgia, the territory of Prince Heraclius,‡ a Chriſtian chief, who in the laſt war between the Ruſſians and the Turks, withdrew his allegiance from the Porte.

* A ruble amounts to about four ſhillings and three pence.

† Conſiſting of rye-bread, and ſalt only.

‡ He is denominated by the Aſiatics, Heracly Khan.

Since the acceſſion of the Crimea to Ruſſia, the empreſs hath held out an avowed protection to Heraclius, who is now declared an independant prince; and it appears that an officer of the court has been deputed to preſent him, in the imperial name, with a crown of gold, and the title of King of Georgia.* By this act of policy, which involved no danger or charge, hath the aſpiring monarch of Ruſſia, ſecured an uſeful ally, and eſtabliſhed on the ſide of Georgia a ſubſtantial barrier against the natural enemies of her ſtate. The other potentates of Europe, are in the uſage of preſenting their portraits, ſome curious animal, perhaps, or patents of nobility to their allies and favorites; but a commanding fortune has enabled Catharine to beſtow on her friends,† crowns and kingdoms. It may be ſaid that Ruſſia holds the ſupremacy of Georgia, and it is probable that at the death of the prince, a period which his advanced age places at no remote diſtance, the ſucceſſion with be arranged in the manner moſt accordant with the policy of the court of Peterſburgh.

An occurence befel me on the day previouſly to my departure from Aſtracan, which from a curious fact which it diſcloſed, may not be unworthy of your notice. Whilſt I was looking at ſome paſſages of Hanway's travels in Mr. Long's apart-

* An ancient name, I underſtand, of Georgia.

† Count Poniatouſky and Heraclius.

ment,

ment, a Ruſſian gentleman came in, who perceiving that I was a foreigner, and from ſome broken words which I ſpoke, probably an Engliſhman, he addreſſed me with fluency in my own language; the book in my hand, which he obſerved, belonged to him, had great merit, and that he was himſelf well acquainted with many of the events recorded in it. Without ceremony he entered into a general diſcuſſion of the hiſtory of Perſia, from the period of Hanway's concluſion to the preſent time, and treated the ſubject with much apparent accuracy.

This gentleman of the name of Marcke, had held the rank of Brigadier General, in the Ruſſian ſervice, and for ſome years directed the affairs of the Ruſſian factory at Ghilan. But, on a charge of oppreſſing ſome Armenian merchants, he was diſmiſſed from the ſervice, and mulcted in the whole amount of his property. Mr. Marcke concluded his obſervations on Perſia, by noticing, that the Captain Elton, who has been already mentioned, married an Armenian woman in Ghilan, and his daughter, the iſſue of that marriage, was now reſiding at Aſtracan. Intelligence, he ſaid, had been received, that an eſtate or legacy had been bequeathed to Elton, during his ſuppoſed reſidence in Perſia, and that if ſuch property had really devolved on him, no one poſſeſſed a fairer claim to it than his daughter, who could aſcertain the legitimacy of her birth, and who now a widow, encumbered with many children, was reduced to extreme

indigence.* It would be an act of charity, he added, to make an enquiry on my arrival in England into the truth of this intelligence, and endeavour to obtain ſome proviſion for a diſtreſſed family. Noticing in me a more than ordinary concern for the misfortunes of this woman and the fate of her father, he ſaid, that if I ſaw her, I ſhould be enabled to repreſent her ſituation with more corroborating facts. He objected to the propoſal of my going to her houſe, apprehending from her manner of life, that the viſit would be incommodious; but went himſelf and conducted her to Mr. Long's lodgings. She was a little woman about forty years of age, had from ſome accident become lame, and was accompanied by a ſon.

Some years ago ſhe had been induced to undertake a journey to Peterſburgh, for the purpoſe of eſtabliſhing her claims, and had reached Moſcow; where ſome Armenians reſiding in that city, diverted her intention, which they repreſented as fruitleſs without greater aids than ſhe poſſeſſed. The honeſt warmth with which Mr. Marcke eſpouſed the cauſe of this forlorn widow, attracted me forcibly to him; and the pleaſure which I ſuppoſe he received at obſerving the like diſpoſition in a ſtranger, whom he was about to part with, probably for ever, incited him

* General Marcke ſays that in a ſhort time after the death of Nadir Shah, Elton was either aſſaſſinated, by the hand, or the order of the father of the preſent chief of Ghilan.

to

to communicate many events of his life, which were related in a manner peculiarly animated and pathetic.

It appeared that he was a native of the Ukraine, and had been early employed as ſecretary to the Ruſſian embaſſy, at the court of London, where, and at Peterſburgh, he formed many connections with our nation, to one of whom, I think he ſaid, his ſiſter had been married. He had ſerved likewiſe in the corps of engineers, where I have ſince underſtood, he acquired the reputation of an officer of ability, and formed a friendſhip with the preſent governor of Aſtracan, who now renders him many offices of kindneſs. After occupying various ſtations in the ſervice of Ruſſia, he was appointed to the direction of the Ghilan factory, whence he had been removed at the inſtigation of the Armenians, who, he ſaid, perſecuted him with uncommon marks of malignity. His property was confiſcated, and he received the ſentence of baniſhment to Siberia, which was afterwards commuted to a cloſe reſidence at Aſtracan. His deportment evinced an unaffected reſignation to the lot which had befallen him; nor was it devoid of a manly exertion of ſpirit. In a tone of ſimple humility, but ſtrengthened by an eye which impreſſed irreſiſtible conviction, he affirmed, that in the condition which fortune had placed him, he experienced a large portion of content. He had given a wide ſcope, he ſaid, to the impulſe of ambition, and had gratified it by the aid of inſtruments he now beheld with horror and diſguſt; but adverſity had at once extinguiſhed every tumul-

tumultuous affection, and endowed him with fortitude, and the ſober enjoyment of reaſon.

HAVING made the neceſſary preparation for my journey, and obtained a paſſport, with an order for poſt horſes,* I was ready on the 10th of May, to leave Aſtracan; and here it is incumbent on me, to expreſs cordial thanks for the hoſpitality and kindneſs ſhewn me by the gentlemen of that city, eſpecially to the honeſt Greek, Ivan Andreitch, whoſe treatment of me, from the day he took me up at Baku, to my departure from Aſtracan, was undeviatingly generous and affectionate. Nor muſt I omit the good offices of Mr. Hannicoff, who expeditiouſly procured the neceſſary papers from the public office, and gave me letters of introduction to Count Zchernichoff, the marine miniſter, and to Admiral Greig.

MR. LONG'S goodneſs to me was manifold; it anticipated all my wants, and indeed, by an anxious attention to my welfare, increaſed them; whether in furniſhing a ſtore of proviſions, as there are few houſes of fare on the road, or in fortifying my travelling conveyance,† againſt the caſualties of a long journey. The journey from Aſtracan to Peterſburgh, having been

* This inſtrument is termed Pedrozchna, without which no perſons can be ſupplied with poſt horſes, the hire of which is fixed by government, at the rate of two copeaks, about a penny, for each horſe, per verſt.

† A four wheeled carriage, called in the Ruſſian language, a Kibitka. It is fixed on the axles without ſprings, and is ſix feet long, and four feet in breadth, of the form of a

been quickly run over, and without a knowledge of the language, you will neceſſarily ſuppoſe that my obſervations were limited and trivial. To qualify ſome of the difficulties which lay in my way, Mr. Hannicoff furniſhed me with a liſt of the ſtages and their diſtances, which prevented the common impoſition of poſt houſes, and afforded me amuſement.

On the 12th of May, at midnight, having travelled two hundred and fifty-eight miles, and two thirds, I arrived at Czaritſin, where I was detained until the next morning, that my paſſport might be examined by the commandant. This gentleman perceiving the embarraſſment which aroſe from my want of the Ruſſian language, entered with much good-nature into the ſtory of my little requiſitions, and ſpeedily accommodated them; though at the time he was much oppreſſed by ſickneſs.

The country to Czaritſin is level and thinly inhabited; yet its abundant herbage, ſhewed the ſoil to be of a good quality. The garriſon of this fortreſs, which is independant of Aſtracan, conſiſts of three or four thouſand men. Since the frontier of Ruſſia has been extended on the ſouth-weſt, by the complete ſubjection of the Cuban Tartars, and the acquiſition of the Crimea, this ſtation is not conſidered of much military account.

of a cradle; about a third part of it, towards the head, is covered with a tilt of painted canvas, from the fore edge of which to the foot, a leather covering is occaſionally fixed in a ſloping direction, as a ſhelter againſt the weather; this machine is ſupplied with a bedding, and contains alſo, the requiſite baggage of the paſſenger.

FROM the weſtern bank of the Volga, and near the fort of Czaritſin, a chain of redoubts of about forty miles in length, ſtrengthened by an intrenchment, extends to the river Don; but which, from the like cauſe that has diminiſhed the importance of Czaritſin, is now of little utility, and has been evacuated. It is ſaid, that the empreſs occaſionally expreſſes a diſpoſition to open a channel between the two rivers; a deſign which had been undertaken by the great Peter, but fruſtrated by the unſucceſsful iſſue of the Turkiſh war, as well as certain difficulties which attended the operation.*

THE ground occupying this ſpace, which I examined, is chiefly compoſed of gravel or rock, and apparently little higher than the level of the rivers. By opening this paſſage, an inland navigation would be effected from the Black-ſea to Siberia, by the medium of the river Kamah, which riſes in that province, and falls into the Volga, about forty miles below the city of Cazan; and the Ruſſian marine, now eſtabliſhed on the Black-ſea,† which has long been a favourite object at Peterſburgh, would receive from this communication a ſupply of commodities, the moſt eſſential to its ſupport; as timber, iron, cordage and canvas. Such a paſſage into the Euxine and Mediteranean ſeas, from a country yielding

* The ſoil was found in many places to be mixed with a large portion of rock; and the officer, an Engliſhman, who conducted the plan, was cut off by banditti.

† The port of Kerſon.

a pro-

a produce ſo various and valuable, may create a revolution equally important in the commercial and political world; and enable Ruſſia, now indebted to foreign nations for the maintenance of her trade, to found within herſelf a mart, whoſe happy ſituation is empowered to attract to a common centre the commerce of Aſia and Europe.

THE Day on which I left Czaritſin, the road led along the ſouthern bank of the Don, which was wholly uninhabited; its current ſeemed to run at the rate of one mile and a half an hour, and the breadth to be about three hundred yards. No occurence of any moment befel me from Czaritſin to Choperſkoy Kreport,* a diſtance of two hundred and thirty-five miles and a quarter; unleſs it be noted, that ſo far from encountering any impediment, I received a general civility and aſſiſtance. When you advert to the predicament in which I ſtood, a ſtranger, alone, and unacquainted with the ſpeech of the country, you muſt yield a due portion of praiſe to the excellency of the government, and the diſpoſition of the people.

FROM Czaritſin extends a tract of uncultivated land, of more than one hundred miles, in the direction of the road, on which no other habitation appears than huts, for the accommodation of thoſe who keep the poſt horſes; but it ſhews no other teſtimony of

* Kreport in the Ruſſian language, ſignifies a fort.

a defert than the want of inhabitants; for the ſoil bears an exuberant herbage, and is not deficient in water.

At the diſtance of a few miles from Choperſkoy, the driver* of the carriage alarmed me by a report of the hinder axle being ſhattered; an accident which gave me an opportunity of obſerving the dexterity of a Ruſſian carpenter in the uſe of the axe. Without the help of any other tool, except a narrow chiſſel, to cut a ſpace in the centre of it for receiving an iron bar which ſupports the axle, and to pierce holes for the linch pins, he reduced in two hours a piece of groſs timber to the requiſite form, and his charge was one ſhilling.

Travelling one hundred and twenty miles from this place, I arrived at the city of Tanboff, not large, but populous, and generally well built, the reſidence of a governor, who examined and put his ſignature to my paſsport. The country was level, bearing little wood, and from Aſtracan to this place I had not ſeen a ſtone on its ſurface. A heavy rain fell during the night of my departure from Tanboff, which cauſed an overflowing of the adjacent brooks, in one of which the carriage ſunk ſo deep, that the horſes with every effort could not drag it, though ſtrenuouſly aſſiſted by the driver. This trivial event ſhould not have been intruded on you, did it not tend to delineate the character of a Ruſſian peaſant.

* He ſits on a low ſeat, fixed on the fore axle.

After

After trying various methods to extricate the carriage in vain, and without a murmur, though the weather was piercingly cold, and he was dripping wet, he loosened the horses, and yoking them to the hinder part of the carriage, he brought it backwards to dry ground. He endeavoured to pass at another place, and was again foiled; yet he preserved an evenness of temper, which I did not think our nature possessed. He did not cease a moment from applying such aids as were best adapted to our relief; nor once shrunk from a chilling wind and rain, which had thrown me into an ague; but severe patience, and an endurance of the roughest inclemency of weather, are qualities with which the peasant of Russia is constitutionally endowed. Whilst we were struggling against this difficulty, which seemed to me remediless, a passenger leading some horses, saw the embarrassment, and chearfully yoking two of them to the carriage gave us speedy relief.

On the 20th of May, arrived at Moscow, distant from Tamboff three hundred and eighty-four miles and one third. From the Volga to this city, I had not seen any land so much elevated as to merit the name of a hill, and but few stones on the ground. The buildings in Russia, with an exception of some of the public structures, and houses of the principal people, are composed of wood, which is so abundant a commodity, that in many places it forms the streets of towns and villages.

In the interior parts of the country, a few of the churches

have lately been built of brick, in modern architecture, and ſhew a juſt taſte; but the old ones are all of wood, heavy ill-ſhaped fabricks, and hung around with bells of all ſizes, which the prieſts, who ſeem peculiarly fond of their ſound, keep in perpetual chime.

At every halting-place, I muſt again notice, the people treated me with invariable civility; inviting me into their houſes during the change of horſes, and ſupplying, at a moderate rate, the things which I wanted. The roads in Ruſſia, during the dry ſeaſon, are in a good condition naturally; for little labor is beſtowed on them; which indeed from the large tracts of intervening waſtes would be impracticable. On ſome days when the horſes were ſtrong, I have travelled from one hundred and twenty, to one hundred and thirty miles, over a country on which the eye could perceive no elevation. The intervening rivers I either paſſed on floating bridges or ferry boats, there being no fixed bridge on the road from Aſtracan to this city.

On approaching Moſcow, its numerous and lofty ſpires* ſhooting though extenſive plantations, exhibit a view equally picturesque and magnificent. The gardens interſperſed through this city, have given it a more extenſive ſite than is requiſite to contain, perhaps, three times the number of its inhabitants, who are computed at three or four hundred thouſand.

* I was informed that the ſteeples in Moſcow, amount to ſixteen hundred,

The

THE driver of the carriage conducted me to a German hotel, whoſe manager, a very aſſiduous and obliging perſon, ſpoke the Engliſh language fluently, and though he had experienced a variety of fortunes, ſome of it very adverſe, he had acquired but little knowledge of the world; that is, he was ill qualified to combat its iniquitous practices, or to derive an adequate profit from his profeſſion. By a credulity and benevolence of diſpoſition, he had fallen a prey to many of the foreign adventurers who infeſt Moſcow, among whom I was mortified to ſee ſome of my own countrymen numbered.

THIS good, ſimple publican, being within my knowledge an unique in his profeſſion, and as rare objects are the grand purſuit of modern journaliſts, I could not paſs this character without introducing it to your notice; and I entreat, ſhould you ever viſit Moſcow, that you will make ſearch for this honeſt German, and after thanking him for his kindneſs to the Indian, ſay, that he was very imprudent in depoſiting a truſt with a perſon whom he never ſaw before, nor could reaſonably expect to ſee again.

DURING the day of my halt, my hoſt did not fail to procure me a view of thoſe curioſities, which moſt attract running travellers at this city, but which having been already minutely deſcribed, do not require further illuſtration. Yet I muſt make ſome mention of a bell, the largeſt probably in the world, and expreſſive of the inordinate paſſion of the Ruſſian nation for

this

this ſpecies of ſonorous inſtrument. It is compoſed of various metals, even of gold, and ſilver; the height meaſures twenty-one feet, four inches and a quarter, the diameter at the baſe, twenty-two feet, four inches and three quarters; its weight, one hundred and ninety-eight tons, two hundred and twenty-eight pounds; and its coſt is computed at ſixty-five thouſand, ſix hundred, and eighty-one pounds. A fire many years ago deſtroyed the building in which it was ſuſpended, and falling to the ground, where it has ſince remained, a piece was broken from its ſide.

Moscow though no longer the capital of the empire, hath not felt thoſe ſymptoms of decay, which are ſeen to follow the deprivation of ſovereign reſidence. Aware of the attachment of the ancient nobility of Ruſſia to this city, and alſo that her ſpacious dominion required a ſecond capital, Katherine hath ſtrenuouſly endeavoured to preſerve its former importance; and the inſtitutions which have been eſtabliſhed, have centred, it is ſaid, a greater portion of wealth and commerce in Moſcow, than it poſſeſſed before the removal of the court.

The ſuperior kinds of Ruſſian manufactures are chiefly fabricated in this city from the rough materials, and are tranſported by water carriage or caravans into the moſt diſtant quarters of the empire. An ordinance ſo ſalutary will eſſentially contribute to fix the proſperity of Moſcow, which is alſo promoted by the reſidence of many of thoſe Ruſſian nobles, who are not employed in the immediate ſervice of the ſtate. They there indulge

dulge that gaiety, diſſipation, and pomp, in which they ſo much delight, at a leſs expence than at the new capital.

Mr. Zchernichoff, the governor-general of Moſcow, has acquired in the adminiſtration of his office, a general good name, by the eſtabliſhment of a vigorous police, and beſtowing on the city many ornaments. Standing high in favor of the empreſs, whom his family had ſtrongly aided in aſcending the throne, his deſires are conſidered as equal to thoſe of the court; and it may be deemed equally conducive to the welfare of Moſcow, as that of the nation at large, that a ſubject of ſuch zeal and authority has been placed in ſo eminent a ſtation. The character of Mr. Zchernichoff deſerves the more diſtinguiſhed notice, as a ſhameleſs laxity and corruption are ſeen to pervade every office and department of this wide-empire, to counterpoiſe its powers and warp the direction of its natural policy.

Mr. Hannicoff having given me a letter to his brother at Moſcow, I went to this gentleman's houſe, where, with much mortification, I ſaw every thing French. The furniture, the dreſs of the family, its manners, and the preceptor of the children were all French. The Ruſſian gentry, indeed, from whatever other quarter they have drawn ſcience and literature, have received a large portion of their manners from France; and it is evidently ſeen, that a connection cemented by ſo ſtrong a partiality, has occaſionally attracted Ruſſia, from its conſtitutional bias, and infuſed a ſpirit of policy inimical to its welfare. The prevalent

prevalent uſe of the French language and manners in moſt of the European courts, is not to be accounted the leaſt efficient inſtrument employed by France, in conducting that general ſyſtem of intrigue, which marks every meaſure of her government however trivial.

I WAS received by the deputy-governor of Moſcow, to whom I applied for his ſignature to my paſſport, in a manner little different from that of an Aſiatic chief to his dependent or inferior. He had juſt riſen from his ſieſta, and was ſitting dreſſed in a looſe robe on a ſofa of ſilk, in the front of which I was directed to ſtand. He aſked me ſome queſtions on the ſubject of my journey with more affability than I had expected from his appearance, and the glitter of ſhew, which ſurrounded him. It is to be noticed that the Ruſſians of all ranks are of a ſallow and brown complexion; few of them, even when young, having a natural bloom of face; this defect I am induced to attribute partially to the exceſſive warmth of their ſtoves, and a frequent uſe of the hot bath, which in Ruſſia contains a more intenſe heat than I have experienced in any country.

AFTER dining with my German hoſt, whoſe attentions to me had been indefatigable, and his charge moderate, I left Moſcow on the 20th of May; on the next morning I arrived at the town of Klin, and breakfaſted with an acquaintance of my Moſcow friend. This perſon, a German, many of whom are ſcattered over this part of the country, kept an inn, but he ſaid with

with little ſucceſs; as the Ruſſian gentlemen, in their journies, ſeldom frequent ſuch houſes, and the other claſſes of people are withheld by their poverty.

The road from Moſcow to Peterſburgh, meaſuring four hundred and ſixty-nine miles and a third, conſiſts generally of a moraſs, and is conſtructed, with ſome interventions of ſolid ground, of ſpars of fir, laid in a parallel direction, and ſtrewed over with earth; this work was performed by Peter I. for eſtabliſhing a more eaſy communication between the interior provinces and his new capital. This extenſive wooden cauſeway, founded on ſo unſubſtantial a baſis, muſt at the firſt ſight excite our ſurprize; but it will in a great degree ceaſe, when it is conſidered that Ruſſia abounds in timber, in robuſt vaſſals, and that the great Peter conducted the operation. My carriage, fixed immediately upon the axles, ſhook me ſo violently in its progreſs over this rough road, that I ſlept very little until the evening before I reached Peterſburgh, when being overpowered with fatigue, I lay down on a bed at a poſt-houſe, deſiring the driver to call me at the expiration of two hours, but no one came near me till the morning.

On the 25th of May, I entered Peterſburgh, and procured a commodious lodging at an Engliſh tavern. Mr. Shairpe, the Britiſh conſul, being informed of my ſtory, invited me to his houſe; and his introduction to many of the Engliſh gentlemen, at Peterſburgh, enabled me to paſs very pleaſantly, a three weeks reſidence

there; he preſented me alſo to our ambaſſador,* whoſe favourable mention of me in England, was eſſentially conducive to my welfare.

In ſo tranſient a viſitor, it would be a manifeſt preſumption to give any detailed account of this ſplendid city, or to deſcribe its conſtitution or laws. I will, however, notice ſuch matter, as its more immediate projection forces on ordinary obſervation. The view of Peterſburgh, adorned with its numerous magnificent buildings, interſected by ſpacious and regular ſtreets, imparts the conſequent pleaſure of beholding a beautiful object; but when I looked on the period, removed only at the diſtance of ſeventy years, when this ſpot, now covered by a proud city, reſorted to by all the nations of the European world, and enriched by an active commerce, was a dreary moraſs, affording a miſerable reſidence to a hord of rude fiſhermen. I was inſpired with reverence and wonder, when I reflected on the creative genius of the man who had accompliſhed ſo glorious a work. Other monarchs have modelled armies, aggrandiſed kingdoms by conqueſt, or gradual civilization; but Peter at once diſpelled the cloud of barbariſm, which inveloped his country, and brought it forth to the aſtoniſhed and applauding view of Europe.

It is on this ground you muſt view Peterſburgh, to render due juſtice to the memory of its founder, who in rearing his fa-

* Mr. Fitzherbert.

bric,

bric, ſtruggled with obſtinate prejudice and enraged ſuperſtition; but they fell before his commanding genius. Nor muſt we forget that thirſt of knowledge, which carried him into foreign countries to court their ſcience, and practiſe their arts. This ſubject hath inſenſibly produced a ſtrain of writing, too ſtrongly I fear impregnated with that ſpecies of colouring, which marks the compoſition of the Aſiatics, and indeed their ordinary converſation, and which, by an intimate connection with them for many years, has perhaps become habitual to me. When you advert therefore to the ſocieties I have mixed in, and alſo to a warm impulſe, which has prompted me to throw a laurel at the brow of Peter, I hope that this effervescence of ſtyle will meet with an indulgent eye.

From the dreſſes of the nobility, enriched by a various diſplay of jewels, their equipage and pompous retinue, the court of Peterſburgh is ſaid to be the moſt brilliant in Europe; and it ſhould ſeem, that the empreſs manifeſtly indulges * this diſpoſition in the courtiers, whether from the congenial propenſity of a female mind, or an opinion, that the intrigues and machinations which ſhe has heretofore ſucceſsfully practiced, will not deeply occupy the minds of a people, involved in luxury and diſſipation.

The Ruſſian gentry, eſpecially thoſe attached to the court,

* She has eſtabliſhed at Peterſburgh, four companies of players, of different nations, French, German, Italian and Ruſſian, which receive ſalaries from the public treaſury.

are either in debt, or they expend the full amount of their revenue; and if the teſtimony of thoſe who have made the experiment is to be credited, we muſt believe in the extreme venality of the miniſters of government, however adverſe to the public welfare. The adminiſtration of count Panin gave a ſtrong proof of this diſpoſition. The French who have ever avowedly oppoſed the views of this empire, have afforded without reſerve, aſſiſtance to its enemies, and who, it is ſaid, reſtrict its Mediterranean ſquadron, to eight ſhips of the line, poſſeſſed during Panin's miniſtry, a leading ſway in the Ruſſian cabinet, which they rendered hoſtile to the general intereſts of the empire. Since that period, Ruſſia has adopted a more natural policy, and is aware of the ſalutary expediency of forming a cordial intercourſe with the court of London. It is noticed that the Ruſſian gentry learn foreign languages with aptitude, that they readily aſſume the manners of thoſe whom they viſit, and lay them aſide with equal facility; and that being a new people, they bear few marks of national originality; but like a maſs of ductile matter, receive the impreſſion of objects in contact with them.

The peaſantry are marked with ſtrong characteriſtic features; they are obedient, attached to their ſuperiors, and poſſeſs an obſtinate courage; but they are addicted to petty thefts, and to an exceſſive uſe of intoxicating liquors. It muſt ſurely be held a reproach on the policy and finance of a nation, when the largeſt branch

branch of its revenue is ſeen to ariſe from an encouragement of the ruling vice of the people; yet this fact is fully exemplified in Ruſſia, where two capital impoſts are laid on corn-brandy. It is ſold by government to the dealers, at a fixed rate, from which a large profit is produced, and a duty is collected from every perſon, who vends it.

WHATEVER cenſure the preſent Katherine may have incurred in ſwerving from the cardinal virtue of her ſex, we muſt unreſervedly ſay, that ſhe hath made ſome atonement for that deviation, by eſtabliſhing a wiſe and vigorous ſyſtem of government, by a liberal encouragement of the arts, and an exerciſe of humanity to her ſubjects, meriting the example of the moſt poliſhed nations. She poſſeſſes a munificence, which has much endeared her to the people, and which an occaſion of diſplaying happened ſome days before my arrival at Peterſburgh. Being informed that an extenſive pile of wooden buildings, appropriated to the uſe of merchants and tradeſmen, was burning with violence, ſhe immediately proceeded to the ſpot, where exhorting the firemen to an active execution of their duty, ſhe aſſured thoſe who had ſuffered by the conflagration, that the buildings ſhould be reconſtructed at the public expence and of more ſubſtantial materials.

AMONG the many monuments of grandeur, raiſed by Katherine, the moſt attracting is an equeſtrian ſtatue, erected to the memory of the great Peter, which is placed in front of the

council-houſe, and in a ſituation commanding a view of the port; nor have I ſeen any figure which exhibits a bolder or more juſt aſpect of nature, except that of our firſt Charles in London. It ſtands on a hugh block of ſtone, whoſe ſummit ſlanting, gives an aſcending poſition to the horſe, one of the hinder feet of which bruiſes the head of a ſerpent.* The figure of Peter looks towards the Neva, having the right arm ſtretched forth with an expanded hand, giving to all nations encouragement and protection. Often did I viſit this ſtatue of Peter, and in reviewing the ſtupendous work, which his hand has raiſed, I have gazed on it with admiration and delight; and did the tenets of my faith permit, Peter ſhould be choſen my tutelar ſaint.

PAUL PETROWITZ, entitled the Grand Duke of Ruſſia, and the only iſſue of the empreſs, having been little brought forward to the public notice, the eſſential parts of his character remain undeveloped. The foreigners who have acceſs to him, ſay, that he is endowed with diſcretion, is beloved in his family, and obſerves a juſt punctuality in the diſcharge of his accounts, a quality the more deſerving of praiſe, as it is rarely found among the nobility of Ruſſia, who have become notorious by an accumulation of debts and a common failure of payments.

* Emblematical of the malignant prejudices, which this prince encountered and overcome.

The

The grand duke is the nominal preſident of the admiralty, though he does not officiate in that department, or poſſeſs any influence in the cabinet; but aware of the empreſs's jealouſy of domeſtic interference, he lives wholly abſtracted from buſineſs.

A GENTLEMAN, who had acquired a converſant knowledge of the court of Peterſburgh, obſerved to me that a female reign was moſt favorable to the views of the Ruſſian nobility; it afforded a wider ſcope, to their ambition, avarice, and intrigue, which under the eye of a prince, eſpecially if he were active, would neceſſarily be limited, and that they would ever diſlike and ſtrive to exclude a male ſucceſſion; nor does this obſervation want proofs of ſupport, in the four laſt reigns of this empire.

In cloſing theſe deſultory remarks, I am induced to notice, that thoſe Ruſſians who have not yet adopted the manners and dreſs of Europe, and they probably include three fourths of the nation, reſemble the Aſiatics, and particularly Tartars, in many conſpicuous inſtances. They wear the long gown, the ſaſh, and the cap; and they conſider the beard as a type of perſonal honor. The hot bath as in Aſia is in common uſe, even with the loweſt claſſes of the Ruſſians, who perform alſo many ordinary ablutions, not practiſed by any northern people, and when not prevented by their occupations, they ſleep at noon. In the manner of Aſia, the Ruſſians obſerve to their ſuperiors an extreme

treme ſubmiſſion, and their deportment is blended with a ſuavity of addreſs and language, which is not warranted by their appearance, or the opinions generally formed of them.

By impoſing a ſuperior value on this quality, the Ruſſians, it ſhould ſeem, have neglected to cultivate the more eſſential virtues, a want of which is often experienced by the foreign merchants, who have incurred heavy loſſes by their want of faith. The copeck of Ruſſia, a copper coin, in name, and apparently in value is the ſame which was current in Tartary during the reign of Timur; and as the paſſage illuſtrating this fact is curious, I will lay it before you.

"THE dearth was ſo great in the Tartar camp, that a "pound of millet ſold for ſeventy dinars copeghi, an ox's head "for an hundred, and a ſheep's head for two hundred and fifty."* This occurrence happened during the expedition of Timur into Aſtracan, at a period of two hundred years previous to the Ruſſian acquiſition of that kingdom. Should a national connection between Ruſſia and Tartary be aſcertained, a reverſe of the general progreſs of conqueſt, which has been ſeen to ſtretch to the ſouthward, will appear exemplified in the Ruſſian nation, who penetrating into the higher parts of Europe, have fixed a capital in the ſixtieth degree of latitude. Embarking at

* Shirriff ud Dein's Hiſtory of Timur, tranſlated by Petit de la Croix.

Peterſburgh,

Peterſburgh, in the middle of June, on board of a trading veſſel, I arrived in England in the latter end of July.

HAVING now brought you to the cloſe of a long journey, the performance of which was chiefly derived from a vigorous health, and a certain portion of perſeverance, I bid you an affectionate farewel, and I truſt, that you will never have cauſe to impute to any of the various facts which have been brought forward in the body of the letters, the colour of paſſion or the views of intereſt. Amicus Plato, *&c.* The opinions deduced from them, given by a man ſlenderly converſant in the higher claſſes of ſcience, and who has yet much to ſeek in the abſtruſer page of human life, I freely commit to your cenſure, as alſo the manner of writing, which I fear will be judged offenſive to the chaſteneſs, diſtinguiſhing the language of the preſent age.

00033067

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 15 June, 2016